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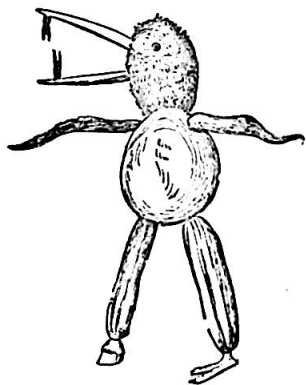
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jubilat is published twice yearly at the
University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Business & Editorial Address: jubilat
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Submissions: Manuscripts are read year round
and must be accompanied by a stamped,
self-addressed envelope. Simultaneous
submissions must be noted as such.
We do not accept electronic submissions.

Subscriptions: Individuals \$14 per year or \$26
for two years. Institutions \$28 per year or
\$52 for two years. Please add \$5 for
Canadian and foreign subscriptions.
Single issues are available for \$8.

Distributed by Ingram, DeBoer,
and Small Press Distributors.

Design by Quale Press.

Special thanks to: Fred Byron,
Lee Edwards, Anne Herrington,
Noy Holland & Eliza Vaillant.
jubilat is funded in part by the UMass Arts
Council & the UMass Alumni Association.

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ISSN: 1529-0999

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JOSHUA BECKMAN

Original cover art and design
JEFF HILLIARD & NINA SWIFT

Congratulations to Michael Burkard, Nathaniel Mackey, Sarah Manguso, and Mong Lan whose poems (which originally appeared in jubilat 2, 3 & 4) were selected by Robert Creeley for inclusion in The Best American Poetry, 2002; and to Dara Wier, whose poem (which originally appeared in jubilat 4) was selected for inclusion in The Pushcart Prize XXVII.

MEMORY OF THE GRAVES

Ko Un

As a youth I was obsessed with graves.
There are six-hundred and eighty-nine
mounds in Hwandung Cemetery.
At Sarabong graveyard on Cheju Island
I would stop on the way every night
to sleep by the grave side.
Word spread that I was a ghost
residing in that cemetery.

A lucky day it was
when someone died and his grave was dug.
I would say with joy,
so, you have come here at last?
What can be a better place
to come to than this one?

At day's end once
drunk as could be I fell asleep
somewhere among the graves
and was stung by a scorpion.
For a week I wore a piece of pumpkin
bandaged to my cheek,
all swollen, in deadly pain.

And again, as a novice monk
on my way back to Marae Temple

in T'ongyong, I once spent half a day
in a graveyard, forgetting
the errand for my master,
a lapse that cost me dear.

A few decades drifted past
until I came to realize
wild animals have no graves!
Animals are better than man;
they are superior to God!
They do not leave their graves behind.
They are far better than myself.
Have I been infatuated, crying and weeping
over graves, in order to awaken
to this simple truth?

—translated from the Korean by David McCann

THE BLUE BOWIE

Terrance Hayes

This guy wept
and told us
he wanted to touch
the earth
with the fury
of a falling star.
This guy wore snow-
storm glitter and bangles
of lightning and tears
back when our slogan was:
Never Pull A Slow Gun
lest your children's link
with you be broken
and they janitor
a blank banner of surrender
into and out of
all the iridescent cities
of War.
*All modern thought
is permeated by the idea
of thinking the unthinkable.*
Ziggy Stardust,
Ziggy Stardust,
A moonage daydream, Baby,
put your ray gun to my head.
Black as a black hole,

why does your big electric pupil
keep looking at me?
I could write my name
in the makeup
on your face.
Sweet blue boy
with a black wind
whistling
through the spaces
between your teeth,
O, whoa, whoa, whoa,
you're a rock 'n roll suicide.
The song has gone
on forever.
And you say, as it is said
Samuel Beckett said
at the end of his life:
What a hell of a morning it's been. . .

THE BLUE MELVIN

The choir said to me: *Sweetback,*
what happened to the sun?

Nigga this, Nigga that,
then more Hallelujahs,
God's gonna trouble the water.
There wasn't all the *de rigueur*
you see nowadays.

This was when there were no protests
outside the Blues & Spirituals,
because no one believed words
were more important than music.

All the maverick Negroes
were eating croissants
in the Bye & Bye by then.
Broke my heart.

I must have run
all the way to Galilee chanting
They won't bleed me. Won't bleed me
Trouble ain't no place to be!

I woke up in Paris
with a kazoo for a grin.

There was Sergei Eisenstein
& several rogue versions of *The Twist*.

I kept my Cable-car
Conductor's card though.
This little light of mine.

I'm gonna let it shine,
you know that one?

I wanted to say more
so when I came back Stateside
I started singing
what the Germans call *sprechstimme*.
I invented rap.
I discovered *Earth, Wind & Fire*.
The choir sang *Stormy Weather*
and I decided there would be no scene
in which something is broken
& after which everything is changed.
I was plenty black
& deep down dirty dog scared.
Half Panther, half panhandler.
I dreamed I was on a ship
& woke up on a ship.
But if God's gonna trouble the water,
what I care about a little rain?

IKARIA (THE NIGHT WATCHERS)

Kira Henehan

i.

charcoal black she goes among something like scenery stronghold this
ancestral home this walk of beacons upon the headlands where landscape

ii.

there are others here begun an age ago the beacon this very night then
you took already the word hibiscus where landscape where fires
determined to finish

iii.

this single movement a conversation and some bricks by the window have
broken through their whitewash the lake hasn't frozen to anyone's
satisfaction we live where the wind can't get in

iv.

and some bricks by the window it is difficult to make certain determinations
at all no again I am going out to sea there are others

v.

(refrain from removing reminders I have been so long among these things)

vi.

likewise difficult to at all determine what I would have certain the beacon
this very night then I will answer for plain as sand or plain

vii.

others here to see shadowed the still of what you said I will answer for
it suffices unsaid or plain as a girl dreaming only unstill beneath the lids

viii.

the lake hasn't frozen we live where the wind can't get in the beacons one
after one down the headlands where landscape where fires this is not a
dialogue

ix.

you took already the word hibiscus keep small artifacts from trips not I
have taken thoughtfully red determined to finish less like the sea she
goes among no again I am going out to sea halfway determined

x.

(refrain from claiming the rain as a reason let out remain out in in and
on all these long years of nights this and this and that halfway means
twice this night)

xi.

there is this night and this stone of no discernible color nostalgia
impossible thoughtfully red likewise it is difficult see shadowed

xii.

others here to see to see shadowed on rooftops what I would have certain
this is a place that seems to have been on fire and halfway determined to
finish it would be safe to suppose now a series of nights charcoal black

xiii.

the beacon of what you said I will answer hoard foreign nostalgias in this
place my own have fled this is not a dialogue having known intolerable
nights I have gone

xiv.

to explain this new calm it suffices unsaid to suppose now a series of
nights fashioned from something akin to redundancy a stone of no
discernible color you will be less like the sea or something like scenery

xv.

(refrain from burning striking the curtains so as not to confuse with
dueling fires)

xvi.

no matter the rain I will not wait for you I am fashioning matchsticks in
the shape of a house there is this night and this before night puts a lid on
it you said already your words have never been for me

xvii.

having known intolerable nights I have gone this night intolerable in the
fugitive sense only black she goes among the fires halfway determined to
finish a conversation though others here

xviii.

to see shadowed on rooftops where lit though make no less of the shadows
the smell less of sea than remembered you will

xix.

this is a place that seems to have been on fire I am making a house that will
burn when struck before night puts a lid on you still as in sleep there is
this day and this conversation begun an age let the not moonlight fade
you finish

xx.

(refrain)

INTERVIEW WITH JIMMIE DALE GILMORE

Singer and songwriter Jimmie Dale Gilmore began his career as a member of the Flatlanders, whose sole recording project in the early 70s was barely distributed, but has since been acknowledged (through the 1991 reissue "More a Legend Than a Band") as a milestone of progressive, alternative country music. While his songs and his ethereal vocal style established his reputation, it wasn't until 1988 that Gilmore released his first solo album for Hightone, "Fair & Square." Following a second, self-titled album for Hightone in 1989, he released three albums for Elektra in the next decade: "After Awhile" (1991), "Spinning Around the Sun" (1993), and "Braver Newer World" (1996). The *Rolling Stone* Critics' Poll named him the Country Artist of the Year for two straight years, while the Grammys nominated him for Best Contemporary Folk Artist for "Spinning Around the Sun" and "Braver Newer World." In 2000 he released "One Endless Night," and then reconvened with the original band members of the Flatlanders to produce—after three decades—a new album called "Now Again." This interview, conducted in the summer of 2002 by Christian Hawkey, took place a few minutes before a Flatlanders concert in Northampton, Massachusetts.

This may be apocryphal, but I heard the writings of Ezra Pound inspired you early on in your career. Is this true?

I read a lot of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot. There was one particular statement that Pound made that resolved a conflict for me—a conflict that I'd had for years and years. It was an absurd conflict but one that I lived in because of the fact that I grew up in two different worlds. I read. I was surrounded by very literate, intelligent people. Some of my friends were musicians, but most of my friends were not necessarily musicians, although they loved music. Because of the strange background I had coming out of

country music (and this was a period when rock and roll was completely dominant—and I love rock and roll, it's a huge part of what I do) there seemed to be this odd conflict: if you were a country music person you had to hate rock and roll, or if you were a rock and roll person you had to hate country music.

Or if you were either you didn't read.

Exactly. And so there was a very odd conflict for me. I guess that tended to make me wonder if I was missing something, if I was mistaken one way or the other. I loved the heart of that old country stuff, but those people distrusted and despised intellectuals. And vice versa—the intellectuals were condescending toward country music. Then I came across the passage by Ezra Pound, and I think I have this quote accurate. He said, "The poem fails when it strays too far from the song, and the song fails when it strays too far from the dance." That sentence was an education for me. What I realized is that this music I really loved was dance music. It was honky-tonk dance music. People danced to it. Very rhythmic, very simple. I already had that opinion, but I had never articulated it to myself before. It's so revealing, and from both directions: it undercuts, in a sense, the pompous sort of thing that poems can so easily get into. And at the same time it recognizes poetry as being crucial to us.

Do you also see "the dance" as a kind of thinking, or way of imagining?

I don't know. All of that is very questionable to me. The whole notion of the interconnectedness of everything is an extremely important insight in the way the world works—and I'm getting this from the Buddhist tradition, which I've been exposed to for a long time—but discursive thought has a tendency to go in that direction, to put us in touch with the "song" and the "dance." And even thinking of myself as an example, I'm a "thought-ridden person," and in one sense I see it as a—I may not be addressing the question directly. . .

I think you are.

... but maybe it's just got to do with words like "thinking" or "thought" having many different meanings, and different meanings for each of the people using them in conversation. Words are subjective. In one sense I revere logic, but at the same time it's become clear to me that logic by itself is kind of dead, which is one of the reasons poetry is so important: it undercuts expected notions of logic. That's also the dance.

Are there other poets you are drawn to?

I read a lot of Ginsberg, and became friends with him later on in his life. I also read Rilke, and a lot of Baudelaire and Rimbaud early on. Although the truth is I'm much more of a fan of prose than poetry. I don't read much fiction. I read poetry now only as it comes to me—someone passes a book on to me, etc. But I read a lot of it in my youth.

One can sense that in your songs, in your vocal style as well as in the wonderfully precise and simple images you use. I'm thinking particularly of the opening lines of "Dallas": "Have you ever seen Dallas / From a DC-9 at night."

You know when I thought of that line I already knew it had everything. It told the whole song in a way. And then it took me a long time to write the rest of that song, because it had to live up to that line. I kept chiseling away at it until I got it. A lot of my friends are very prolific—Butch Hancock, for instance. I think Butch is a real poet. He's much more natural and relaxed. He thinks of the cleverest word plays and hilarious puns, and it doesn't bother him to go into total silliness in the next line. He'll write something completely profound, and then undercut it with the opposite. I admire that play a whole lot. I've always tended to be more serious, which I see as an affliction.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Lubbock, Texas. It's flat and desolate. It's farm country—originally cotton—but it's also a university town. It's a city, not a little village now. It's extremely typical of middle class America after WWII. Geographically it's sort of featureless. There are no rivers, and there are trees because of irrigation. It's isolated. But what does that mean now? There are cars, television, movies, cell phones. My old friend Michael Ventura—I don't know if you know his work, he's a writer—he lived with us for a short period, when the Flatlanders were living together. He grew up in New York City, I grew up in Lubbock, and we both read the same books. I also credit—and this isn't flippant—I think MAD Magazine was my opening to the world.

Is there something about its sense of humor that appealed to you?

That's the crux of it. I think that humor is in every way the highest art form—whether it's fiction, movies, paintings, or poetry. It's the hardest to do, and it's the most effective and the most fun. I think it's really the highest trait of human beings. In fact I think I'm way too serious about humor.

I asked that question about where you grew up because I've always wondered if that landscape was somehow connected to your music?

I can't tell. Maybe it could be, since I was somewhat “disconnected” as a child. I was more involved in my thoughts than with life in a way. But I personally believe that the real dynamo of creativity in us is interaction with other people. I think those things are universal. And I don't really see “the landscape” being a crucial thing, and I acknowledge that in this attitude I'm really at odds with a lot of people—even my own friends. They see it as a huge component of their work. But I don't see it that way. I think it's really about the dynamics between people. That's the real thing that's going on,

whether it's in Beijing or Rio de Janiero or Katmandu or Lubbock. It's about living together and learning how to communicate.

How did you start playing music?

It was an accident. My dad was a guitar player, and he was extremely good at one style, which was all he cared about. He was not a virtuoso, but he had a taste that I either inherited or simply shared. We became estranged from each other during my teenage years and early twenties, but we never lost that connection. A lot of my peers rejected that type of music—"Oh yuck, that hick twangy stuff." But I loved it. And that was the beginning. . .

And then Ezra Pound came along. . .

Yes. I happened to be reading books at the time, and I came across that passage which explained something to me. I still don't really know if anyone else can understand why that quote had such an impact on me. It was such a funny context, but I felt like he spoke directly to me. Also, I've been a fan of Rumi for a very long time—long before he was ever "rediscovered."

Before he took up seven shelves at Barnes & Noble.

And deservedly, I think. His poetry is an ongoing inspiration to me. It's so unpredictable—the element of surprise in Rumi is constant.

Are there other artists—perhaps visual artists—who have been important to you?

Well, most of my favorite artists have been cartoonists. There are also some poster artists who I think are geniuses, but who may never be perceived that way by the public. Walt Kelly was my first favorite cartoonist. He did "Pogo." It may be dated now, but it was utterly brilliant at the time. The drawing is just amazing, as well as the story. As a little kid it was one of my early inspirations behind loving words. I also loved, as I said, Don Martin's

MAD Magazine, and I think R. Crumb is one of the great geniuses of the American 20th century—particularly of the 60s. But I think he's a towering genius in a context where people don't recognize it.

There has been a lot of press about the so-called classic country revival—the O Brother Where Art Thou soundtrack, for example, has done extremely well. What's your perspective on this?

I'm really happy about it—I see it as a kind of cycle that comes around periodically. In any art form somebody has a big breakthrough, and that becomes what everyone starts copying. Then it slowly fades because it becomes the same thing over and over. All the radio stations are interested in is not losing their listenership, and so they don't want to take any chances. But all the best stuff is made out of taking risks. Then the kids, who have only been exposed to sort of trashy, same-y stuff, they discover a whole bunch of really great music that hasn't been popular. That's what happened in the 60s. We were rediscovering this great old music that had been buried for a while. I think that just happens over and over again. That's what's happening right now—a resurgence. And out of that resurgence always comes some completely new, unexpected creativity. But it's really a strange thing. There's always an interplay between innovation—a love for the surprise—and the forces that say, "This is the thing we can rely on now." And so the innovation becomes the habit. It becomes the opposite of innovation—sameness.

A final question: if you had to describe your voice as a landscape, what it would be?

Townes van Zandt once said to me, "I can just hear the wind in your voice." Actually, the wind and the sky are the dominant features of landscape that I grew up in. The horizon is almost a dome-like container for the sky. Within it is just the wind and the movement of the wind—storms and thunderstorms. You know, there's an emotional component to the wind. It can be a howling wind, or a gentle breeze. Either way it transports you.

CALAMITY CRIER

Charles Simic

Of this much you can be sure:
Shadow lengthening among other shadows
Of other hurried pedestrians,
The more innocent you believe you are,
The harder it'll be for you.

In this store window full of musical instruments,
I could not see their faces
And neither could they see mine.
A mouth accustomed to chewing ashes,
I thought, and turned my back.

What a huge parade of phantoms,
I quietly observed, and went after them
Like some old fool warning of world's end
With red sunset over my back
And a row of dark pawnshops up ahead.

PROWLING MEMORIES

The moment you shut off the lights,
There it is once again:
The bird that flew into our classroom,
The gray kitten swimming in the river,
The used condom in the toolshed.

And you imagined you'd see
Your grandmother sewing.
Instead, here's that key in a saucer of small change
That wouldn't open any lock,
The crackle of a distant radio station
Broadcasting a prizefight on a hot night.

Go ahead and make a funny face, someone says.
Leave me alone, you reply.
No such luck.
Here are all the flies you tortured,
The voice says.
The two dead people you called your parents.

WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD

Wine that bloodies the lips and tongue,
Then a half-whispered tale
Of how young witches
Used to ride married men
Through the sky at night.

The stars were like lit candles
That had wandered away on their own,
And the misty woods
Were a floating white nightgown.
It seemed only yesterday
Old Scratch tucked us into a bed of dead leaves.

You let a snake crawl around your legs,
Except it wasn't really a snake,
And it was closing time.
A beat up old van with four bald tires
Waited for us in the parking lot.

DEPOSITION OF THE ONE WHO HELD THE DOOR

Ed Pavlic

seismic shifts in the ice cap
a polar bear's wait crystals
lid a blue eye belugas
break the clouded lens & steal
breath from cold fury & chalk
white rage a leg caught in silk

wings wink eyes twenty-two times
the size of its head drawn back
a shudder travels the web
impulse & its spit-smooth flip
side metabolic scurry
the furry thing in the rock

lock & pick for nickel plates
& a chamber mate last ditch
& vaseline tip prisms
spun thru blind light ball-peen
tongues noli me tangere
hair triggers thru scar tissue

HOW TO LOVE A BICYCLE

Eula Biss

You can buy weekly papers that are all advertisements. No news, no stories, no pictures. Just pages of what people in this city want to sell and want to have. Golf equipment, comics, baby clothes, fax machines, bicycles and women.

"Wanted: Cute professional Female with interest in fiction, film and fine foods by attorney/author/academic Single Black Man, 6', medium build, 43, who's read everything but likes to listen, loves to cook, laugh out loud and drive German sedans."

I watched a man read one of these papers from front to back. He read every page from air conditioners to woodwind instruments. I was amazed that this man didn't get tired of reading the ads. And that so many people know what they want.

"Wanted: Very tall bike, for a man 6'4" tall, looking for a fairly recent racing or eventually touring bicycle, the saddle tube must be 62cm to 64cm, that's about 25in. Comfortable seat preferred, nice tires, can pay a good price."

My mother answered a personal ad for a man who advertised himself as a "Workaholic Handyman." Perfect. Her old farmhouse needed some work on the roof and a new porch. You see the logic. But when she wrote to her handyman, she didn't mention repairs. She sent him poetry.

The workaholic handyman didn't write back. If my mother had asked him to fix her porch he might have called her. They might have liked each other. He might have worked on the roof and she might have sharpened his tools. It could have been a practical arrangement.

If you have ever watched the way a handyman touches his tools, you understand that there is an intimacy to practicality. But practicality is unromantic, and so are personal ads.

"Successful, independent, good looking middle-age blind man, white, 5'8" tall, 165 lbs., educated, drug free, seeks a full amazon-type woman, large hands and feet, friendly with sense of companionship."

My cousin and I disagree about where the life of a bike is. I think it's in the gears and the chain, the parts that turn. She thinks that it sleeps between the brake pads.

"Model Attitude Race, brand new, never used, extra components, beautiful, gorgeous mango color, selling cheap. Runs like a Cadillac."

There is a certain romance reserved for machines. Nice cars, good tools, well-made engines. Moving parts. My father told me that the best thing you can do for any machine is to use it. Don't let it stand still and rust because it is made to move. If you use it enough, there is very little else you need to do.

I look down at the chain on my bike turning between the pedals and I feel satisfied. I'm taking care of my bike. I help it do what it was made to do and it carries me.

"Magna 20in girls Mystical Passion coaster brake, lovely, tires old but treads are good. Has been used well, no scratches. Get around easy now."

His body is not as important as the way I see things when I am with him. The world has more substance, colors are more vivid. Because we walked by the river together, the river becomes part of our love affair. I know it more intimately. It is mine.

"Every year I drive to Florida. I rent a house right on the water that has its own pool. I don't want to go alone again. I am looking for a nice woman to go and I will pay for all. I am going in May. Ask me anything."

When I walk through the city now, I'm able to say things like, "I've ridden here once." The bike is my witness, my companion. The bike takes me places I would rather not go alone, like through the crowds at Grand Army Plaza on Saturday. Down deserted streets at night.

"Workman's model 3T3CD, rear carrier basket, some rust, personality, nice shape, honest."

I have had several bikes. I remember them each distinctly, they each had a different character. But I have loved each of them with the same love, the specific love that I reserve for my bicycle.

When did you find out that your Mom and Dad had other names? I already knew how to read when I discovered my father's name on an envelope in the kitchen and carefully memorized it by repeating both his first and middle name over and over. Roger Thomas, Roger Thomas, Roger Thomas. How strange, how awful, that we all have had a person named Mother. My mother is nothing like yours.

I knew a couple who called each other Sweetie. They never used each other's names. He was her Sweetie and she was his Sweetie.

"Twenty year-old boy seeks financially secure man to take care of me. I'm a princess who likes designer clothes and the arts, be my prince. I'm always sweet to my sugar daddy."

There is a role in life called "mother" and we all have some sense of what it means to fill that role. I'm scared that there might be a role in life called "companion."

"One Requirement: Total submission. I'm a dominant, hung, firm male in search of a hot, obedient female. Please be normal."

Can you "true" a person the way you "true" a wheel? Make them more perfectly round so that they will run smoother? Is it possible that the more a person is able to be an individual, the less they are able to be a companion?

I would rather be alone than to play this role for anyone. I would rather live with my bicycle.

"Carbon based life form seeking same to help fill the chilly immensity of existence."

I understand that you might need someone to share your life with. Not someone in particular, someone in general. This terrifies me but I appreciate the necessity. There is a beauty to necessity that is more believable than the scripted beauty of romance.

"Marriage of convenience! Gay, wealthy thirty-five year-old male looking for fun, smart female. A Will and Grace type-deal. I am good looking with many friends but have chosen to be closeted."

Romance, for us, is marked by inconvenience and impracticality. Romeo and Juliet. Tristan and Isolde. The more improbable and impossible the love affair, the more intense the love.

But then, strangely, we have a very utilitarian understanding of marriage. We use the word "dysfunctional" to describe families that don't adhere to a certain model. This implies that we believe there is a function to families. A function to marriage. This makes marriage into something like a machine. A generator that produces efficiently or inefficiently.

The best thing you can do for a machine is to use it.

But marriage does have a function, your husband argues. The function of the family unit is to produce and nurture children who will become, in turn, functional members of society. The structure of the family, he argues, is based on the most powerful human instinct, the instinct to procreate.

Maybe. My desire to sleep is much stronger than my desire to procreate.

"I don't care what we do. Come spend the summer with me, let's make memories together. Soft butch looking for someone to love."

One summer I was so lonely I didn't know what to do. The only contact I had that felt human was the water I swam in. I swam in the morning before work, in the evening when I came home, and occasionally I would wake up at night and walk to the reservoir where I would stand on the shore watching the bats over the water before I dove in. I loved the reservoir. I knew all the details of its banks and the moods of its water in different weather and light. I thought, at one point, that I had never experienced such intimacy. It may have been at this point that it occurred to me that the reservoir knew nothing about me.

"They aren't like us, they don't have feelings," my mother says of men. This sentiment—that the others, the foreigners, do not have feelings—has, in some form, justified genocide. It has not prevented my mother from wanting to be with a man.

"Sensual, bitinglly witty, very cool, fit, fun, bright, occasionally cynical, sweet, spontaneous, intelligent, funny, artistic, successful, expressive female seeks one good man."

My mother recently married. Her kung fu teacher offered to take her to China if she would meet his brother-in-law. She went to China and she came back married.

My mother is not like your mother.

He speaks no English and she speaks no Chinese. She doesn't want to be alone. He doesn't want to stay in China.

I've never seen my mother so happy. He sent her roses, the first flowers that any man has given her in her life. She has always wanted someone to give her roses. I don't know why.

"Woman's bike sought, rare model designed for women's bodies. Closer handlebars, wider seat, lighter frame. Will take in any condition."

Some women want a man, some women want roses, some women want a woman and some women just want a bicycle.

Riding my bike to work I high-five all the businessmen holding out their arms for taxis on First Avenue. I am alone and I am laughing and I am so in love.

from AN UNTITLED SEQUENCE

Michael Burkard

you had to learn something from lists
of advice: the heart without said heart knowing:
the beer and the job and the boss without being sensible:
river of heart does not flow even after a few with the boss:
give it up: you are not his / he is not yours:
house but by:
buy moon mine:

there's a self destructive memory of another life
just after the rain falling: there's your trial by error
and that Lydia like greeting: Jean has a resulting energy:
i am not for or against a night in venice
i am not for or against the wandering horses

something coming largely undone:
Hikmet's "I still have pictures of me taken there. . ."
i am still taken
still photographs by unstill waters—
still there is an idol "ended up" as i reacted to red book
white book—what would it be like to be an animal
without a name Paul said—the word dreamer—
it would be a word dreamer without a word and if you
leaned your head slowly just so someone there would
talk to you—now if i had sent bob's reddish horses
we could have used them for the cover—always this
sense of using—it is like an infection—this is

how you can get me home again—tell me you have run out
on the key—tell me the flute and the viola and the complicate
are lined up like the furniture we saw with our eyes—same
hill beyond shadow, same life as life was with you—

I still have pictures of me taken there—
was interrupted hours ago by another knock on the door
and another child—a brother later met on the corner
took my hand—I took his—

it is just something to say
 it is a way of not finally trusting in any words or places
 like them—Bourgeois' Light Bulb Attempt at Self-Knowledge, 1948
 is a wonderful clasp and joke on myself—
 it too is a k
 as far as i am concerned—it is like my extravagant home sometimes
 filled with rain and kisses and other k—
 and here comes w and l b
 (l and b) to play—LB's initials in the light bulb—
 the strange promises z made to m and to h are further discussed—
 chekhov is invited to see b
 sharon is asked to ask t something
 ver y palpar
 we love to create light and birds and pansies and grades to
 enumerate schools by and names to name teachers by and unknown names
 to name windows by—
 and d will assume chris' name as i did
 and q will assume the identity of some strange punctuation mark
 and i will assume a prone position in the meeting of the addicts
 because i feel guilty about hopkins—these kinds of dreams are
 tree limbs—a voice not unlike sharon's blesses me from an indigo
 or a kind of indigo map of a map's world—the dream sense has
 briefly doubled upon itself—no doors are slammed—
 the deathlife has taken another job and requests a meeting with c
 —the alphabet is tired
 —i remember one wing of the alphabet kept in the school of missing
 things: words, children, windows: none were more sought after yet
 more homeless: one's classic insomnia took a seat next to a beloved
 windmill, one's sky became another girl's autumn, one's feeling became
 another boy's a, or worldless game. One chance became one mirror,

the girl's painting of the horse became the forest the horse had come from. One thing requested respected as a word. One talker said I am just as lost. And capitalizing myself does not help. A helper became a cup of coffee. The number 19 the moon. My little son sat with Louise and sat closer when he said my father wanted me to be a girl. I am hoping for a tiny newborn. He said he would glance.

the murder starts
 i am in another country—
 my sister calls me to tell me the murder has started—
 we momentarily confuse each other because i think she means
 the murder has started in another country
 but she is simply reiterating the fact i am in another country
 but because i am another country—actually am at an inn too—
 because i am inn another country
 i am in
 i am
 inn—
 the murder starts with the man having asked for money on the subway
 stairway ledge as he is prone and perhaps really perhaps asleep
 —his sleep is even like this word perhaps here
 slightly out of place
 the kind someone would say don't use don't use that radar
 —but he used it
 —so many passersby but once in awhile of course someone puts
 money in his cap which is part of his hand
 —the murder starts because someone hates him
 even this space he uses is hated
 it is meant as everything by some hater
 and in the word lux for light
 or las sambras for the shadows
 or the one door of the word lifted onto one door
 Y recuerdo
 maybe all he was reported as saying
 Y recuerdo
 nada mas nada mas
 nada mas—

it is in the one rooster i was robbed of my rob and struck
not only by conversation but by this strange hammer
and the blow of it
and the collapse of it
the and of it
—camisero

let's see if you leave a lot out people will not guess Ashbery's
 "clean washed sea"—
 instead will think of midwinter some other gyration from themselves
 for their own missing lives lives which were like any lives
 talking
 how do you say
 inconsistently—i place a yellow t shirt upon the already floor
 for the already cat panther and sheerly the cat makes an inconsistent
 move to the front door which is down an andre dubus like stairway
 an andre like photograph
 a hundred or even thousands of eric berlin signs
 or a hundred or even thousand eric berlin radios
 or matt garite banisters or clocks he has presumed in the eventual
 tenderness of his own heart—like a ghost reader
 or a ghost reader who has returned in your night to tell you how
 to turn the energy of a dream into a space that can actually help
 you inhabit your own heart the next day—so you don't armor yourself
 too heavily or armour yourself too heavily either—
 it's sort of the same thing when you lean into it—
 better than the shirt can but that isn't as supposedly/always as true
 as one seems—the shirt is one—when you were homeless
 you held on to your clothes in a like manner—
 hey people did not like you
 that was obvious
 your clothing was a different thing
 any clothing you could find
 you became a version of a scarce crow you saw in an art museum
 on a cold day before they asked you to leave ("they")—
 your thinking was hey i am more like this framed space suit stuffed
 with used clothing than anything else in here or even the thing

itself—talk to me for god's sake—okay i feel homeless in a
different sense now
when i do these books such as unsleeping—it's like a part of
myself has betrayed part of myself—when you were on the street
well what is it like now
i mean do you ever feel equally or almost equally betrayed?

don't know what imaginable or unimaginable circumstances
 played upon her—
 needless in the night
 i saw my work working on my father and my friend who were
 talking
 how do you say
 inconsistently—and when one smaller reader left before
 anyone in the audience could say hey stop i want to talk with you
 about how you talked to us—but this sounds very hostile doesn't it
 very much a milieu or a therapist
 someone said i wanted help who meant to say i needed help
 but the help was an expensive one hundred and sixty dollars an hour
 and hour
 as i type that out in print i see how long the amount takes to say
 i saw my father working on the home small accounts standing he did
 at his dresser
 i saw my father close the door to heaven when he went with my mother
 to talk with her
 i saw an endless parrot or so i thought
 this endless parrot was the first bird of the spring one year
 because i walked early down a new york street
 a brooklyn street when i looked in the window and saw
 then i realized this is spring the first day for our species
 and therefore and therefore
 not about to answer your call because of all the implicit criticism
 in tone and yes i do not say some words right and yes i am the one
 who has let himself be betrayed much by himself in matters of self
 importance and also art is it my art i don't know it is what i do
 how do you say small when the radio no longer uses that word
 nothing is ever small anymore in this small literal box of a radio

or hand held small world too
what happened to my friend who was run down by a bicycle only
a few weeks after being set up mugged two people followed in a car
while one followed on the street
then it was as if a sudden photograph entered his room
if we sleep in this same room together even though you seem a
canyon away are you wanting to sleep with me in the endless
endless night?

THE HACKERS' DICTIONARY

!

Common: {bang}; pling; excl; shriek; <exclamation mark>. Rare: factorial; exclam; smash; cuss; boing; yell; wow; hey; wham; eureka; [spark-spot]; soldier.

“

Common: double quote; quote. Rare: literal mark; double-glitch; <quotation marks>; <dieresis>; dirk; [rabbit-ears]; double prime.

#

Common: <number sign>; pound; pound sign; hash; sharp; {crunch}; hex; [mesh]; octothorpe. Rare: flash; crosshatch; grid; pig-pen; tictactoe; scratchmark; thud; thump; {splat}.

\$

Common: dollar; <dollar sign>. Rare: currency symbol; buck; cash; string (from BASIC); escape (when used as the echo of ASCII ESC); ding; cache; [big money].

%

Common: percent; <percent sign>; mod; grapes. Rare: [double-oh-seven].

&

Common: <ampersand>; amper; and. Rare: address (from C); reference (from C++); andpersand; bitand; background (from `sh(I)'); pretzel; amp. [INTERCAL called this 'ampersand'; what could be sillier?]

'

Common: single quote; quote; <apostrophe>. Rare: prime; glitch; tick; irk; pop; [spark]; <closing single quotation mark>; <acute accent>.

()

Common: left/right paren; left/right parenthesis; left/right; paren/thesis; open/close paren; open/close; open/close parenthesis; left/right banana. Rare: so/al-ready; lparen/rparen; <opening/closing parenthesis>; open/close round bracket, parenthisey/unparenthisey; [wax/wane]; left/right ear

*

Common: star; [{splat}]; <asterisk>. Rare: wildcard; gear; dingle; mult; spider; aster; times; twinkle; glob (see {glob}); {Nathan Hale}.

+

Common: <plus>; add. Rare: cross; [intersection].

,

Common: <comma>. Rare: <cedilla>; [tail].

-

Common: dash; <hyphen>; <minus>. Rare: [worm]; option; dak; bithorpe.

.

Common: dot; point; <period>; <decimal point>. Rare: radix point; full stop; [spot].

/

Common: slash; stroke; <slant>; forward slash. Rare: diagonal; solidus; over; slak; virgule; [slat].

:

Common: <colon>. Rare: dots; [two-spot].

;

Common: <semicolon>; semi. Rare: weenie; [hybrid], pit-thwong.

<>

Common: <less/greater than>; left/right angle bracket; bra/ket; left/right broket. Rare: from/{into, towards}; read from/write to; suck/blow; comes-from/gozinta; in/out; crunch/zap (all from UNIX); [angle/right angle].

=

Common: <equals>; gets; takes. Rare: quadrathorpe; [half-mesh].

?

Common: query; <question mark>; {ques}. Rare: whatmark; [what]; wild-char; huh; hook; buttonhook; hunchback.

@

Common: at sign; at; strudel. Rare: each; vortex; whorl; [whirlpool]; cyclone; snail; ape; cat; rose; cabbage; <commercial at>.

V

Rare: [book].

[]

Common: left/right square bracket; <opening/closing bracket>; bracket/unbracket; left/right bracket. Rare: square/unsquare; [U turn/U turn back].

\

Common: backslash; escape (from C/UNIX); reverse slash; slosh; backslant; backwhack. Rare: bash; <reverse slant>; reversed virgule; [backslat].

^

Common: hat; control; uparrow; caret; <circumflex>. Rare: chevron; [shark (or shark-fin)]; to the ('to the power of'); fang; pointer (in Pascal).

—
Common: <underline>; underscore; underbar; under. Rare: score; backarrow; skid; [flatworm].

`
Common: backquote; left quote; left single quote; open quote; <grave accent>; grave. Rare: backprime; [backspark]; unapostrophe; birk; blugle; back tick; back glitch; push; <opening single quotation mark>; quasiquote.

{ }
Common: open/close brace; left/right brace; left/right squiggly; left/right squiggly bracket/brace; left/right curly bracket/brace; <opening/closing brace>. Rare: brace/unbrace; curly/uncurly; leftit/rytit; left/right squirrelly; [embrace/bracelet].

|
Common: bar; or; or-bar; v-bar; pipe; vertical bar. Rare: <vertical line>; gozinta; thru; pipesinta (last three from UNIX); [spike].

~
Common: <tilde>; squiggle; {twiddle}; not. Rare: approx; wiggle; swung dash; enyay; [squiggle (sic)].

MIDWESTERN

Keith Driver

"Eventually," said the man and we nodded,
for the man was either very tall, or very overweight
and had waved a baton and had grown a beard
and had said, "eventually." And we nodded.
We had been to the Europe of pay toilets.
And we had been to the Europe of sooty mattresses
and we had asked, "what can we get for *this* much?"
But now it was the man, and now it was the documents
dropped in a mud puddle, and the man said,
"eventually," and we nodded. Bothersome veins
appeared in the eye, and our cargo of figurines
had been chipped on the journey. But now
it was the man—a horse standing beneath him.
And the man brandished a whistle and a newspaper
that we could not read. "Winter," it said on his T-shirt.
And we could see the mall behind him in a reddish haze
and we could hear its metallic chime. One of us
had a nickname. One of us loosened his necktie.
One of us had a tumor in the lung. Swallows
and pigeons and ceramic mobiles splashed
in the muddy stream. A powder blue rain fell into the trees.
And the man blew his whistle. And the man showed us
his diorama. And we removed our glasses,
cleaning them on our shirttails. And one of us coughed.
And one of us asked to make a phone call. And the man
combed his long beard and said, "eventually." And we laughed.

MONSIEUR PHOT (SCENARIO)

Joseph Cornell

The voices will be silent and the rest of the picture will be in sound.

New York City about 1870. A park on a winter afternoon. In front of a large equestrian statue, the base of which is protected by an iron picket fence, stands a row of nine street urchins facing the camera. One holds a basket of clean laundry, another stands beside a harp. The recently melted snow has left puddles of water among the car tracks in the foreground.

The urchins are giving their attention to a photographer and his apparatus shown at almost close-up distance on the left edge of the field of vision. His high silk hat is lying by his paraphernalia on the wet cobblestones.

Some bickering among the boys causes the photographer to emerge from under his black sheet, and he threads his way fastidiously through the puddles to the group of urchins. The photographer is heavily bearded in the style of his time and his manner is one of excessive politeness. He is wearing a wing collar and formal afternoon dress.

Close-up of photographer and boys. His politely remonstrative gestures reveal that he must have absolute order and quiet from them.

Original scene. The polite photographer picks his way back to his camera and goes under the black sheet again.

At this point we are permitted to view the scene through the lens of the polite photographer's black box. Perfect order prevails among the urchins, when, at regular intervals, a group of pigeons fly monotonously five or six

times in and out of the field of vision. Then the photographer is interrupted by a passing horse-car.

(From now on the film will be in color).

Before there is time to press the bulb, a pheasant of gorgeous plumage runs excitedly into the scene. The urchin with the laundry chases it, disappearing for a moment or so with his basket at the left, then taking his place in line again.

Quiet again prevails when suddenly the basket of laundry seems to have become animated and the above mentioned pheasant finally extricates itself from a train of white linen. It flutters in the air striking with its beak at the boys who shield their faces pitifully with their arms but do not fight back.

Close-up of boys and bird. The photographer strides into the scene and beats off the pheasant with his silk hat. The urchins bestow upon him looks of heart-rending gratitude. The polite photographer helps to reassemble the linen. (Here ends the passage in color).

On returning to his camera, the photographer must wait patiently for a horse-car to pass slowly. The scene is still viewed through his camera. Calm again reigns when the urchin with the harp seats himself quietly on a stool and begins playing Reynaldo Hahn's lovely "Si mes vers avaient des ailes!" The others stand attentively and are not distracted by the music.

Close-up of the photographer emerging as in a trance from the black sheet. His eyes are moist and he is deeply moved. He remains frozen for awhile in an attitude of gentle ecstasy. Fade out into the original scene without the view through the photographer's camera.

The urchin at the harp is the sole survivor of the group. He continues to play as the polite photographer industriously packs his apparatus. He then

dons his hat (he wears no overcoat), shoulders the apparatus, and, waiting for another horse car to pass, carefully crosses the puddles toward the boy. He stops for a moment and turns toward the back of the harp player who is oblivious of his presence.

Close-up of the head and shoulders of the photographer looking down upon the urchin in tenderest compassion, tears streaming down his cheeks and spotting his immaculate white wing collar.

Original scene. The photographer goes on his way past the statue into the distance. The playing continues. It is becoming dark. Snow is beginning to fall.

An hour later. It is now so dark that we can but barely distinguish the boy at the harp through the falling snow. Another hour later. Complete darkness except for a few street lights in the distance. The rippling music of the harp sounds like a fountain playing into water. The bleakness of the past two hours has been punctuated by the passing of an occasional horse-car. We hear the far-off approach, see what we can of a dimly lighted interior through the snow covered windows, and hear the distant crunching of the heavy wheels swallowed up by the night.

Just as the sound of one of these cars fades, the voice of a rich mezzo-soprano floats out upon the night air, singing in French the melody, "Si mes vers avaient des ailes!" which is superbly accompanied by the harp.

With the song ended, there is to be noted a change in the playing of the music. With each repetition there is more feeling poured into the execution, until a more transcendently beautiful interpretation is scarcely imaginable. The music stops suddenly. Complete silence. After some moments a horse-car is heard approaching, passing, and swallowed up again by the night. The snow is still falling.

The huge parlor of a hotel of the Victorian period. Windows the height of the room line the walls on each side. The floor is covered with figured carpet. Large, elaborate chandeliers and ornate decorations give the impression of a ballroom. In the foreground, to the left, is a piano with a dust cover. Morning sunlight is streaming in through the windows on the left and a Sunday calm reigns. On the left edge of the field of vision, seated in a chair which is half turned toward the camera, is discovered the sole occupant of the vast hall, the polite photographer. He wears formal morning clothes and is examining some photographs.

Close-up looking over the photographer's shoulder. The first photograph we are permitted to view is one of the horse-car of the previous scene; the urchins are peering out of the windows and some pigeons are resting upon the horses' harness, while the harp and basket of laundry repose on the car roof. Another photograph reveals the former park scene covered with snow up to the hoofs of the statue of the horse, giving the effect of the horseman riding through the snow. The harp is lying over the rider with all its strings broken, so that it looks as if the rider's outstretched hand had just struck the last note on the wrecked instrument. As the photographer has lingered over this photograph the tender and poignant passages from Strauss' "Tales from the Vienna Woods" have been heard. The photographer displays considerable emotion.

(The film will be in color from now on).

The next photograph is a close-up view of the gorgeous pheasant aflutter among the white linen. At this point, to the end of the episode, will be played that section of Stravinsky's "Fire-Bird" which so marvelously suggests the bird's flight into the distance.

In the meantime a maid in an immaculate, starched white uniform has

entered the background on the left, working towards the photographer with a feather duster. As she nears him she brandishes the duster, (the feathers of which are identical in size and color to the pheasant) so vigorously around her white uniform that the amazing coincidence causes the photographer to jump to his feet, dropping the collection of pictures. The maid pays no attention to him and in a few moments exits to the right, dusting as she goes.

Close-up of head and shoulders of photographer. There is a nonplussed expression on his countenance and perspiration trickles down his face dropping upon his immaculate white collar.

Original scene. The photographer turns in the direction of the maid and follows her with his eyes. Then he gathers up his pictures and slowly seats himself again. (Here ends the passage in color and the Stravinsky music).

Through the doorway at the end of the hall there enters a young man in concert clothes. He is accompanied by an attendant who removes the dust cover from the piano and then retraces his steps. They pay no attention to the photographer who is likewise undistracted by their presence.

The young man seats himself at the piano and strikes some very grand chords. He is an artist of the pigeon-flight school. At first one supposes that he is just warming up, but this sort of preliminary playing seems to be all of which he is capable.

Suddenly a breeze or strong draught causes the chandeliers to start jangling like Japanese wind bells, filling the hall with very agreeable music. They are supplemented with incidental music from the orchestra, Tschaikowsky's "Danse de la Fee Dragee," charmingly appropriate. The pianist looks up angrily and waits for this impromptu concert to stop. After a minute or so of impatience, he makes a rapid exit through the doorway. The attendant reappears, replaces the dust cover, and exits. He is not surprised at the music of the chandeliers.

The photographer becomes suddenly alert as the music ceases very gradually. He glances up curiously. His countenance is benign and serene. He gathers his photographs and walks slowly towards the other end of the room, along the windows at the left.

The reflection of the chandeliers in the mirror at the end of the room catches his eye.

Close-up of the photographer on the left edge of the field of vision, looking into the mirror. By means of a fade-out the reflection of the chandeliers in the hall becomes the chandelier in the interior of. . .



A large, sumptuous glass and china establishment seen through plate glass windows. (This episode opens with color).

Slightly to the left of the center of the window is discovered the urchin of the harp peering into the depths of this forest of exquisite glass and ceramics.

Suddenly from somewhere inside, the gorgeous pheasant darts into view. It flies at terrific speed in and out of the chandeliers and pieces of priceless glassware as if they were branches of his native wood. At times it swoops gracefully past the counters, grazing the pieces by a hair's breadth. When it flies slowly, the boy traces the movements with his finger on the plate glass.

As the bird nestles in one of the glass pieces or vases to rest awhile there is heard some music which engages the attention of the urchin. It sounds like distant harp music. The urchin becomes tense as he recognizes its source.

Close-up of a fountain at the rear of store. It is made of thin blown glass and through its fantastic shape water plays into a glass basin. The music

caused by the falling drops of water is strongly reminiscent of the haunting waltz of Debussy, "La plus que lente." The close-up has permitted us to realize better the fairylike and supernatural atmosphere of the glass store. In this miraculous setting we feel that anything might happen. We are so enchanted that two or three minutes of the close-up, just as it is, do not seem too long. Suddenly the fountain stops playing and there is a tense, nervous silence of about half a minute; then a violent fluttering and beating of wings, mingled with the rolling of a snare-drum, which also continues for about half a minute. Several deafening reports of a gun are heard in rapid succession, accompanied by the pandemonium of a million pieces of falling glass.

Original scene outside the window. The urchin, shading his eyes with his hands, is searching for the cause of the fracas since the whole scene seems just as peaceful and undisturbed as ever.

Fade-out into the hotel parlor before the mirror. The camera moves back enough to take in the doorway. We now discover the cause of the preceding disturbance. The pianist stands in the doorway with an old-fashioned gun in his hand surveying the debris of the glass from all the chandeliers which is scattered on the carpet. There is a distracted and slightly remorseful look upon his face.

The photographer walks through the doorway, turning to the left. Each is oblivious of the other.

Original view, long shot from the other end of the hall. The pianist lays his gun against the wall and slowly advances to the piano. He is bravely restraining his emotion which is on the point of overcoming him. He removes the dust cover and slowly walks to a pile of the shattered glass. He covers the pile of glass very carefully with the dust cover. Then to the tender

and poignant passages of "Tales from the Vienna Woods" he walks slowly towards the doorway and exits.



A street corner at night, at which time it takes on an appearance of supernatural beauty. Enclosed by a low lattice-work fence are two lamp posts placed among life-sized marble statues of women in classical poses. The bluish light from the gas flames gives the statues the appearance of figure-heads on old ships, illumined by phosphorescent seas. Snow is falling.

Within this enclosure the urchin of the harp is discovered restored to his beloved instrument, from which issues the strain of "Si mes vers avaient des ailes!" with a new significance. At times the notes sound like sobs heroically stifled. There is an occasional passerby who takes no notice of the playing. An occasional horse-car is heard in the distance.

The selection is played through about three times, becoming softer with each repetition.

The scene is one of inexpressibly serene and satisfying beauty. Fade-out.

EPILOGUE

The epilogue will be entirely in color and the action carried out as in a ballet.

An old-fashioned stage setting seen through a portal. There is an aisle through the center, flanked by a row of decorative lamp posts behind which is dense foliage reaching to the ceiling. Seated by each lamp post is an urchin at a harp.

The action commences with the urchins playing ensemble an ineffectual

ballet selection, such as Lincke's "Glowworm." When they finish they applaud vigorously, bravos and whistles mingling with the applause.

As the applause dies out, we hear being played by the unseen orchestra the kind of soft string music that accompanies a stage mermaid as she reposes in a glass tank filled with water and nonchalantly reads from a book and devours a piece of fruit.

As the music continues, there emerges from the background a form. As it approaches down the aisle, it is seen to be a camera on wheels behind which is the polite photographer on roller skates, under his black sheet. As they near the footlights, the black sheet flies into the air. The photographer grabs wildly at it several times, almost losing his balance each time. He finally grasps the sheet as the gorgeous pheasant flies out from under it, but in so doing crashes to the floor. The camera continues on its course, toppling over the footlights out of view into the orchestra pit. There is a glorious sound effect as the camera lands in a drum, upsetting triangles, glockenspiels, etc., and causing false, bewildered notes by the frightened musicians. The music ceases.

The urchins leave their harps and hurry to the aid of the photographer. They help him to his feet and support him to prevent another mishap as he exits to the left. In the meantime, four of the urchins with violins have seated themselves apart and expertly play the scherzo movement from Debussy's string quartet.

The urchins all return now to their harps. The harpist nearest the footlights suddenly breaks into a short solo, the invigorating "Tic-Toc-Choc" of Couperin. He is applauded.

The regular lights now go off and the lamp posts become illuminated. In the dimmer light, we notice that something has appeared on the left side of

the stage in the foreground. The regular lights go on again. The new object on the stage turns out to be the piano and pianist of the ballroom scene. The pianist's back is toward us. On the shiny black piano stands a large, magnificent, highly polished glass dome enclosing a pheasant of brilliant plumage in a natural setting. An attendant is just leaving the stage with a dust cover.

The pianist goes through some gyrations of the hot-cha school of singing, thumb-licking, rope-weaving, etc. The urchins give him their attention as he starts striking impressive chords in his affected manner. They become bored, however, and in less than a minute drown him out with an infectious gallop of 1870 vintage. The pianist rises angrily. The urchins stand and meet his gaze.

As the pianist rises, the photographer appears at the right wearing his high silk hat and pointing a gun toward the piano. The photographer fires, demolishing the glass bell. The lights go out instantly and there is complete silence.

When the lights of only the lamp posts go on after some moments there remains nothing to be seen but snow falling on baskets of clean laundry scattered in the aisle and stretching into the distance.

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IN VACANT OR IN PENSIVE MOOD

Lisa Beskin

You sent a chance to hell.

 You went to hell with a musket.

You fired without accuracy.

 Blackcurrant soup was never your specialty.

Lovers came and governors went.

 The big summer day

shoved itself through the window.

 You got too hot and bumbled around

in your panties, as clouds inched across the sky,

 smaller than they looked in the movies.

There was a time when you rescued the baby mice,

 all rosy and blind, and massaged them till they glowed. . .

Well, get dressed, take a little walk,

 think about custard or a new set of table manners.

Poor hummingbird in its violent stasis,

 all that nectar burned up.

Never mind. The past is always just up ahead,

 scanning the daisies with an eye half neutral,

half on fire. Remember that night's

 on the way, it's here.

Time to study your skin,
bathed as it is in the dead light of stars.
So why this face, these hands,
this ceaseless hair?

ON THE OCCASION OF MY MARRIAGE TO ROD SERLING

I salute you from the folds of my labial self,
from a cosmos left ajar, from a drop
of hot amber and the cranial after-hours.

I salute from the nick of time,
and from Technicolor. From an evil garden,
a burned-out shell of ocean, from a sneeze,
a dusty star. Shake it, little docent,

I've got the mindset of a Canadian penny,
the pro-rated feelings of insect-flecked vodka.

I'm a plexus of sequins, I salute you
from Bootsy Collins' jumpsuit.

So the gods are puny and afraid of our germs.
They salute anyway, posing in brave tableaux
hung for everyone's pleasure. Let's wave back,
then kiss, we divots in the cooling ether.

Alone in their rooms, children tack up
their starry boxes; eternity stirs from a light sleep
lacking detail. And I salute you:
my bridegroom, my anvil, my stare.

EACH THING CHARGED

Ben Doyle

each thing, charged
with ought, bends—

breaks light, which
is ought but

part star. Ought
is, I see

in the thick
book, a vulgar corruption.

Someone heard
someone say

an aught when
they said a

naught. Each thing,
charged with a

naught, bends,
breaks light bad.

I am not
a vulgar corruption.

Let's play oughts
and crosses

in this tree
time is not

a line. You
blocked me with

your crosses. Cat
wins, random fortunate cat.

The tree bleeds
the blood gums,

blubs, smells positively
Jemima.

—My head, it
ought to have

a cap like
that, yellow,

threaded, and
all. Each thing

ought to too.
the stars are contagious.

AN INSPIRING TRANSMISSION

Onwards today 2002 to invent the steam engine
so as to drag these crates of spoiled feast away
and these oxidized girders that cost five bucks
apiece after the library fell and to drag these moth-laced
robes away quickly away into the ocean at the end
of these tracks and ties which have already been
installed in straight lines to california because the thing
in the water has evolved but cannot reach the pier
unless the water gets taller so it is hacking with said
water sloshing in its amazing new lungs & each in
hale costs a stream of mer in the new improved throat.
On to invent steam, based loosely on the steam
we breathed leaving—say ah say as say is say
aspiration—the womb into winter. This will start
the wheel wheeling. Onwards today to find local
sponsors for *Leviathan Ought Two*—a program
outlined in your brochure but simply elucidated here
because we know you won't read it—a program
in which you are encouraged to feed the whales
whale chow laced with whale aphrodisiac and slow
venom and to download these songs into your pod
these soprano mating songs that some whales use
and to use your local "Pod Pod Land Buoy" to play
them into the pacific of your choice so as to induce
hot whale procreation which will shake the sea prettier
& taller but more will engender ONWARD (Obscene
Whale Reproduction) which should taller the water,
as whales are large, providing that evolving thing entry,
a place to carry on on and get it on on. That should

whirl the whorl. That just could budge it up enough.
Onwards to collect the "Sponges That Soaked So Much
Up They Became A Kind of Gel," for we've seen them
on the walkways & they upset our sense of capacities.
From above perfect circles. From the side a kind of nipple.
They soaked so much up they became a kind of gel.
These we will squeeze when we arrive though it is difficult
to squeeze some kind of gel. So squeeze these sponges
between sheets of glass. Onwards to laser a glacier.
Salt alone seems not to keep the meat. Steam. On. Once
we have the steam, we shall invent the steam shovel,
then on to lower the land. Put the land in the water.
As the clear water rises from the land you put in, observe
the thing as its sense-stick specializes and splits.
Fives. Observe it as its locomotion-stick specializes
and splits. Fives. Note the muck in its miraculous
new mouth, the five new holes in its head the ocean
enters. Onwards today to fill a rubber ring with air
for you can't throw unsheathed air at the water it will break.
But no one has invented any rope. We so meant to
invent the Lifesaving Ring but all it seems we've invented is
the Boat. The Waterwings. Onwards now the coming thing
just became. It is just beyond us. The water is so clear,
clear as nothing. It breathes the water, eats a feast, has a house,
sports a gown. It spreads sponge on itself, it smells pretty.
Five of its kids come out from behind a wet rock.
They look like it, but more. The five holes in each head
are handsome, clear as nothing. They each ride a whale to work.
They work well together. Steam comes from the fissures,
they collect it, give it away. They could kill us if they cared.
Now we are the plants no one thinks about, no one mentions
in the plant books. They spread their waterwings. They're birds.

WHITE ANKLETS

Shauna Hannibal

I.

She walked in on it she could tell
right away what she'd done she was
wearing white anklets something
makes wine goody touch me where it all fits
together and after all the majesty
with which water falls she's finished
righteously streaming hither

2.

Come wet turn screw whomever
I was wearing white anklets when
I walked in on it there was no
question of joining him then as if

orchids dangled off trees or peonies
burned like crumpled tissue set on
fire I turned my back my goodness
asphalt and let the sirens scream

INTERVIEW WITH KEN LOPEZ

Ken Lopez has been in the book business for over 20 years. He currently sells rare books, and specializes in Modern Literature, Native American Literature, the Literature of the Vietnam War and the 1960s, and Nature Writing. He also has an established record of placing authors' archives in institutional collections. Lopez is the President of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America. He maintains an office in Hadley, Massachusetts and welcomes visitors by appointment. Robert N. Casper and Michael Teig conducted this interview in the fall of 2002.

How did you get started in bookselling?

I worked in the bookstore at Goddard College. Raymond Carver was the head of the writing program up there, so all these really good writers were around: Carver, Richard Ford, Geoffrey Wolf, and Tim O'Brien were there, and Ann Beattie came up. I discovered—for me it was a revelation—that these people were writing really cool stuff. I thought it would be fun to have all of Carver's books. His first book was about ten years old and had been done as a little pamphlet of about 50 copies at Sacramento State College. I think I paid the grand sum of \$70 for a copy. It was an inscribed copy, as almost all them probably were because they went to friends and so forth. These days, if you could find a copy of that book, it'd be \$5,000 even if it wasn't signed. So that got me into collecting for myself. I also wound up scouting for other booksellers part-time. I'd haunt the used bookstores down on 4th Avenue in New York City and find things that would show up in catalogs for a few hundred dollars, and I'd sell them to buy books I wanted but couldn't afford. Later I discovered that's the tried-and-true entry position into the world of rare book traders.

When you decided to start selling books in the catalog, it seems that your own personal collecting interests and idea of making a living selling books might have come into conflict. How do those two things relate?

Well, that's true. As a collector, I was tempted to keep the best book I got by an author. When I was doing it full-time, I couldn't afford it—I began to filter some of my personal collection into my stock and sell them off. I quickly realized that if I was selling these books, I could afford to buy a lot more expensive and rare items. I couldn't afford to buy a \$1,000 book if I was just going to keep it for myself.

Is it hard to let go of the things you find that you love?

Well, yes and no. It became so clear that I could have cooler stuff than I would have ever imagined if I were willing to part with it down the line. Having this stuff, seeing it and appreciating it, is the part that's really enjoyable. Putting it on your shelf and forgetting about it doesn't really matter. I got to see it; I got to delve into it. And the fact that it went on to some other home and didn't reside on my shelf actually felt good. Objectively speaking, I didn't think my house and my bookshelf was the best possible place this thing could spend its life.

Do you have books that you've hung on to all this time?

Yes. I started out with Robert Stone collections, and I still have one of the first really expensive books I ever bought. I think it was \$350—I had to buy it in installments. It was a copy of Robert Stone's first book that Jack Kerouac had given to his brother-in-law, and it said "Dear John—hope you like this" signed by Kerouac. In my generation, Kerouac is a clear hero or idol, so having a copy of my favorite author's first book that Kerouac had given to his brother-in-law. . . I thought I'd died and gone to heaven.

Could you talk a little bit about getting to know writers?

It came upon me by surprise. The New York Public Library asked if I could help them purchase the manuscripts of Robert Stone, whose bibliography I had recently completed. So, I contacted Stone and arranged for the sale. Back then the market in literary manuscripts and archives was poorly defined—there were not enough buyers or sellers to make for predictable prices and track records. So the playing field was weighted towards the institutions, which knew a lot more about what could be bought and sold. As a result, writers were constantly solicited for their papers but very often asked to donate them. After I helped one writer place an archive for a lot more money than expected, other writers got in touch with me. I saw Bill Kittredge at a party, and we stayed up late drinking and talking. He was in his sixties at that point, and the idea that his papers might actually be worth something was a surprise to him. He said, you should come up to Montana and tell all my friends. That has become a steady part of what we do, in addition to buying and selling first editions and issuing catalogs.

Your catalogues are very informative. Do you learn everything on the fly?

Well, right around the time I was finishing working in new bookstores, a change in the tax laws caused books to go out-of-print much more quickly than they used to. Before the change, publishers would print 5,000 copies of a book, and twenty years later there were still 1,000 copies in their inventory. After the change, in 1978, publishers couldn't depreciate unsold inventory the way they could earlier—so they would declare these books out of print and remainder them. That meant that right at the time that I was starting to be a bookseller, books that were two, three, five years old were going to be scarce. For me that was good, because it meant there was a legitimate market for the books that interested me the most. Nobody in the rare-book trade had paid attention to those books, so almost from the start I knew more about my field than any other rare-book dealer.

Why did you choose to include so much information about the authors and the history of their books in your catalogues?

There were two reasons: one was that I'd gotten a Daedalus Books remainder catalog in the mail and read about books they had for \$2.98—books I'd basically never heard of. By the end of reading one of their two-paragraph descriptions of a book, I wanted to read it. And then the other part of the equation was because I started out, in a sense, knowing more about these books than any other bookseller, I quickly realized I probably knew more about these books than most of the people on my mailing list. I'd gone out and bought each one of the books in my collection for a specific reason, and it would probably help me sell the books if I said why I thought they were good enough to put in here in the first place. I also realized that context is a really important part of what makes these books interesting.

Do you ever find editor's comments—and if so, do you ever find that a writer you like has been helped immensely by his or her editor?

I can't remember. I've often had the opposite experience: I've seen editor's comments and felt thankful the writer ignored them. The guy I was out with last weekend was like that. His editor wanted to change a lot in his book—big things, small things, and so forth. The guy didn't do it, though, and his book was much more powerful than it would have been had he tried to frame it into this more marketable, more palatable format. I think you've gotta have a fairly strong ego to believe that if you sit down and put your pen to paper, because you think you have something to say, other people in the world might give a shit.

Do you screen the people who buy the books you love the most?

No. If they've got the money and the will to buy it, that's good enough for me. It's not my job to pass judgment. One of the coolest things I ever had

was out of my field—the original of the Indian treaty that ceded the Black Hills to the U.S. two months after Custer's Last Stand.

It wasn't in a museum?

That's what we thought too, and it turned out for a bunch of different reasons that it wasn't. After Custer was wiped out, the U.S. basically declared war on the northern plains Indians. The government sent 40% of all the armed forces to South Dakota and surrounded the Indians and said "Hand over the Black Hills or we'll kill you all." Two groups of Indians went across the border to Canada and didn't sign it, but the rest did. The Black Hills were the whole reason for the war in the first place, because they discovered gold there a couple of years earlier. So this is the original treaty, which allowed the United States to become a continental nation. The taking of that land from the Indians is what allowed the Northern Pacific Railroad to go through and make the transcontinental connection, as well as give the U.S. all the gold in the Black Hills. It was a very profound treaty and one that is still in litigation—it's the basis for the biggest and longest land claims case the Indians have ever had. When I saw it, I had some sense of what it was, and I couldn't put that treaty in a box. I carried it with me on the plane. It was signed by Red Cloud and Spotted Tail.

Where is it now?

Well, I bring this story up because we had the treaty in our stock at a couple of book fairs and a guy was real interested in it. He was a serious collector in a lot of different fields. I ran into him in an elevator in the hotel—he was a sort of low-key looking guy in Bermuda shorts—and he says, "You still have that Indian treaty? I'm going to buy that." Sure enough, he came down a couple hours later and wrote a check for six figures. It's now in his personal collection. He's also got one of the original copies of the Magna Carta.

Is that how you know you can accept a six-figure check from somebody?

Yeah, pretty much. And he's got five places around the country where parts of his collection are on display. They're like private museums. They're available to scholars and things like that. I heard he's an absentee landlord in California, and he makes his living renting houses to migrant workers. If I were passing judgment, perhaps his money wouldn't be good enough for me. But he's a serious collector. He's got the will and he's got the means. He's also aware of a certain level of responsibility toward the world-at-large with his collection, in terms of making it available, and he knows more about these things than I do.

What's the biggest archive you've ever sold?

Biggest in terms of dollars was just under \$500,000, but we're not supposed to talk about that. That's why nobody knows what the Kerouac archive went to the New York Public Library for. In terms of size, we shipped Pauline Kael's archive a couple of months ago and I think it weighed 2,200 pounds. We had an archive from a western writer named Rick Bass, who's a lot younger, but it weighed just about a ton because he's an incredibly prolific writer of letters.

Is there anything too small to collect?

Not really. John Updike is the most heavily collected living American author, and as a result we buy any Updike stuff that's unusual. Updike apparently was getting so inundated with requests to talk or give a reading that he developed a little rubber stamp to put on a postcard saying, "Thank you for your inquiry. I regret that I do not do readings, Do not do talks," etc. He'd check off the one that applied and send it off. We bought two or three of these little postcards—they were hand-addressed by Updike. And that's about as slight as you can get, but we sold those to people who were

Urdike collectors and thought it was a fascinating thing to know. Or there's the Philip K. Dick archive, which we bought the remainder of. We had a call this morning from a guy who has a Tim Powers website, and also did the bibliography of Tim Powers. He told us that in the Dick archive there was a sheet of the manuscript of Powers' novel, *The Anubis Gate*. Powers and Dick were roommates, and once when Powers was gone Dick sat down at his typewriter and started typing this parody of *The Anubis Gate*. When Powers came back and saw what had been done, he pulled that sheet from the manuscript. This guy wanted to include it in the Powers bibliography, though I'm not sure why—maybe just to engage Powers fans. It was Dick having a blast at Powers' expense.

In a larger sense, do you think there are limits to collectibility, as a collector and dealer?

There are limits I can imagine with regard to privacy. For instance, David James Duncan, who is a prolific correspondent and whose books have a lot to do with grief and loss, has elicited from readers an enormous number of letters saying, "I've never written to an author before, but your book. . ." and then they'll tell the story of their particular tragedy. Duncan has developed ongoing correspondences over 10-15 years with some of these people—which include dozens, or even hundreds, of letters. When you visit a writer's archives, it's great to see something about the writers' lives and what goes into the work, but I don't know that all of their lives should be public, or should be accessible.

That makes sense.

That's the only example I can think of, though. You know, Allen Ginsberg's archive had his boots in it, and stuff like that, as well as other less mentionable items like his special jar of K-Y jelly.

Well, that brings up one interesting question about the nature of trust in your business: trusting that things are what they seem.

The question of trust is increasingly problematic because of the Internet. In the last six months the number of forgeries on E-Bay have probably quintupled. It's hard to know the provenance, and a lot of times wishful thinking plays more of a part than actual knowledge.

You often hear about forgeries in the art world. Does this also happen frequently in the book world?

You see it at the highest levels. About five or six years ago, the Jones Library in Amherst got a bunch of donors together to buy a previously unknown Emily Dickinson poem. Once they got it up here, they realized that it was a forgery. Last year I was looking into fraud on the Internet and was told that in the realm of sports and celebrity memorabilia somewhere between 85-95% of the autographs were bad. My sense was that in books it was probably 20%, but now it's probably 50%.

So there's a lot of pressure on you to authenticate what you sell?

I bought a collection of Cormac McCarthy books from a good collector, and he'd gotten a lot of these books signed, which is unusual—McCarthy doesn't like to sign books. When I got them home, two of them looked to me to be forgeries. And it turned out they were the two he had bought on the Internet.

I remember reading a few years ago about Hollywood stars giving first editions as gifts. Is that over or has it continued?

We've sold books to Johnny Depp. He collected Kerouac's stuff and was working on a movie version of *On The Road*. Brad Pitt bought copies of the books that his movies were based on. I like that because it does get into the papers.

Can you tell when someone walks in the door what kind of collection they might buy?

You could tell in the mid-90's when there was lots and lots of money around and a lot of new people were coming into the market at the top, and just buying high spots. But beyond that, book collectors will surprise you. Lots of them are into things that you wouldn't even know to ask about. One of the standard lines is "my collection's very eclectic." Many, many of them say this, and it's true. But it's not that their collections are formless, it's just that nobody's defined for them what that form is—they've defined it for themselves. When you start to tease out who they collect and what kinds of things they've found, they start to have their own little constellation of what's important to them in the literary world.

I've heard American rare book collectors are less formal than their European counterparts—do you think that's true?

The Europeans in the book trade, both collectors and booksellers, are typically much more formal than their American counterparts, and they obviously have a much longer tradition of book collecting than we do. The whole field of modern first editions is an American invention, which arose out of the depression when book collecting in America came to a standstill. Nobody could afford very rare books, so some enterprising American booksellers (Scribner's Bookstore among them) started offering first editions of practically contemporary American writers. There is a great Scribner's catalog from 1932 with first editions of Hemingway and Joseph Conrad and Faulkner for \$3. There was a notion in America that you could decide what you wanted to collect and that made it collectible. That prerogative is very American.

Was book collecting before that time the province of a few people who had the money and expertise?

Yes, and you could buy into that club if you had enough money and were willing to do pretty much the same thing. Americans basically turned that

notion on its head and said we can collect what we want. Lots of Europeans still think the whole realm of modern firsts is entirely bogus, just this fabrication of the Americans. And sometimes they have a point. A couple of years ago at the Boston Book Fair, the buzz was that two expensive books had sold at that fair on the first night: one was a first edition of Copernicus that sold for \$16,000; the other was a first edition of Harry Potter that sold for \$22,000.

Do you collect music-related items?

We've had some psychedelic posters from the 60's, and some good Grateful Dead things and rare posters and some occasional artwork. I do when it's something that's personally interesting to me—and mostly, again, with the kind of American idea that. . .

Why not?

Yeah, why not?

How does academic and popular fiction relate to collecting?

It's hard to know. In a recent *New Yorker*, Jonathan Franzen reviewed William Gaddis and talked about writers whose work was based on a premise that writing was serious art, who approached the written word and the engagement with the reader with a different set of assumptions than writers whose work Franzen regarded as entertainment. The interesting thing to me is that all the writers he mentioned as serious artists in that regard are extremely collectible. And a great many of the writers he mentioned as entertainment-type writers are also collectible. Someone once said that the price of a first edition contains more information in terms of popularity, cultural importance, literary artistry, maybe a couple of other factors too, than any other single number or identifier for that book. And books like *Harry Potter* that are

collected get these big prices put on them. It's partly supply and demand, but it's partly that they're ticking off in several of those categories. It's not always the same set of values for any given book.

Do you see yourself as a part of this dialogue?

I don't often feel like I'm blazing new trails.

Are there things that you argue for that you don't think other people are talking about?

There have been. When I started doing Native American literature, somebody like Leslie Silko was below the radar, and now she's part of the canon. I don't think I had much to do with that.

How do you find out about writers like Leslie Marmon Silko before they become popular?

Sometimes it comes from collectors telling you that a person is really fabulous even though you've never heard of them, and otherwise it comes from personal taste. I pulled *Ceremony* off the shelf when it first came out for no reason other than I liked the dust jacket. When I read it, I thought it was one of the best books I'd ever come across. When I think back to the early 1960s, all the Beat writers were way off the collectible-books radar. The idea of Allen Ginsberg or Ed Sanders being collectible would have been laughable, and now they're as mainstream as you can get.

Do you look at authors now and say, "This is going to be collectible"? Can you put your finger on that as it's happening?

I can't. I was recently lamenting that I can't.

So for a rare book dealer and collector, the writers who do a lot of publishing before they become famous are probably more exciting than the writers whose first book makes a huge splash?

There's a certain amount of literary archeology that's just fun, that discovering these virtually unknown pieces of writing that really good writers have published is a trip. I mean, Hemingway's first book was published as a little pamphlet—three stories and ten poems. He didn't publish poetry again for the rest of his life.

That must be amazingly rare and expensive.

He was nobody, and it was a tiny little cheap gray paper pamphlet, printed in Paris. And if he hadn't written *The Sun Also Rises*, and the other things he wrote, it would have been just another cheap pamphlet by some young writer that nobody cared about. Now it's a \$75,000 book.

Are there books you're still looking for? The Holy Grails? The Rosetta Stones?

Because I kept my Robert Stone collection, I spent a lot of time looking for the proof copy of his first book, called *A Hall of Mirrors*. When he originally took it to the publisher, it was called *Children of Light*—the title was taken from a Robert Lowell poem. However, the publisher discovered somebody else was going to publish a book called *Children of Light* that year, and they asked him to change it. So he took a phrase from that same Robert Lowell poem and used that as his title. But the proof was done up when the title was still *Children of Light*. I knew that early on, but had never seen a copy of that proof. I knew of one guy who had the manuscript, though—he showed me a photograph of it. But he kept it in a safe deposit box and I never saw the book itself, until last year. Somebody called me up and offered me a *Children of Light* proof.

Who are some of the writers you really love who haven't yet become Franz Kafka or Robert Stone?

I've been reading a lot of lightweight fiction, including a lot of mysteries,

and two writers have really struck me. One's a Scottish guy named Ian Rankin. He writes extremely good police procedurals, but with great characterization, and a good sense of the place, the milieu of contemporary Edinburgh. He does for contemporary Edinburgh what Chandler did for 1930s L.A. Another guy is a guy in D.C. named George Pelecanos. When I first read his book I just thought *this guy is fabulous*. In the mystery field there's a limited number of plots, and if you read a lot of them it takes a special angle on it to strike you as original. He had that and he's also gotten to be very collectible; his first couple of books are \$400 and \$500 these days.

Do you often keep books for a long time, or do you move them pretty quickly?

We put out probably six or eight catalogs a year. We did one on nature writing, and a couple on the sixties in Vietnam. We did one on "books into movies." We're building collections for another Native American catalog, and another Vietnam 60s catalog. It takes longer to build one of these catalogs now. As a rule of thumb, I ask myself if one of my customers is likely to stumble across a book in a year's worth of browsing in used-book stores. If not, it's probably rare enough to catalog. These days, a lot of books that fit that category are easily available on the net—within minutes you can find twenty copies and take your pick. When we released our third Native American catalog, I got a call from a librarian who said, "Thank you so much for the really interesting Native American literature catalog. I learned an awful lot. I got on the net and found two thirds of the books for one third of the price. Thank you so much."

Was that just to be a jerk?

Either he was just being an jerk or he was just oblivious, one of the two. But I realized at that point that he was right. By giving out the information in the catalog, I enabled him to go and find two thirds of those books—they had been there yesterday, but he didn't know what to look for. If you're

going to put it in a catalog you are giving it away, and that's fine, but then you should give it away conscious of the impact it may or may not have on the marketplace. I realized our next catalog had to have a higher percentage of books that you wouldn't find in a year's worth of browsing and that aren't readily available on the net. It takes longer to find those books.

When you read through all these catalogs you discover strange new ways of talking about books—like “foxing,” for instance.

Foxing is a kind of discoloration of the paper that ends up as these little brownish spots. Not all paper foxes when it ages. We don't get that much foxing through the pages in modern books, but you do see that kind of spotting or chemical change on the edges of the page, the top edge, the fore-edge and so forth. A number of our books will mention slight foxing on the fore-edges, things like that. And you hope you're being intelligible to people, or if you're not they'll ask someone.

Are there other aspects of rare books, like foxing, that one wouldn't know to look for?

Probably. I remember this guy who was a collector of Maxfield Parrish prints and posters, but also liked some Beat literature. He came by my place a couple of years ago, and I had two copies of *On the Road* there. At the time one of them was priced \$1,250, and one of them was priced \$4,500. As far as he was concerned they looked identical. It really had to do with a tiny bit of rubbing—*On the Road's* got a black dust jacket, and it rubs against the other books on the shelf and as the black rubs through a little bit, you see the white paper underneath. The degree of rubbing on the *On the Road* dust jacket can make a huge difference. He didn't notice that the red and blue on the spine had faded out considerably on one and was much brighter on the other. So you're looking at a book that's *this* big, and you're talking about areas of color that are about *that* big, and to his eye they just didn't register.

It must be strange—when you get a book you must have to go through and examine every part.

I got a copy of Tony Hillerman's first book on E-Bay last week with a nice inscription about how this one came out pretty well, but he was going to have to do better on the Navajo portion of the next one. The seller described the dust jacket as nearly mint with some slight fading to the peach-colored lettering on the spine. So I bought the book and this clearly had been a dust jacket that had come off an ex-library copy and put on the book. It had a little spot at the bottom of the spine where there had been a sticker on it. When they pulled the sticker off, it was a little more purple underneath than it was around the sticker. And at the middle of that little darker purple spot, the sticker had also pulled off a little bit of the paper so there was a little white area that somebody had colored in with their felt-tip marker. If you looked at it, you could see more little white creases that had been colored in with felt-tip, and all along the fore-edge there were more. The front flap also had this kind of jagged edge to it, and clearly somebody had cut it out of where it was pasted down to a library copy and didn't cut it very straight. And this guy was selling it—it was a collector selling off his own collection, and he thought it was mint, in a nearly mint dust jacket. As soon as my eyes landed on that little slightly darker purple, it jumped out as if it was a giant red flag, and so that book probably wasn't even very good. It has the appearance of very good, but I gave it to Holly—who does our preliminary cataloging—and I said, "Here, describe this for me. Write down what you're going to have to write in our catalog to describe this book." And she essentially wrote a list of the book's flaws. I told the guy and he was actually gracious enough to take it back, although I haven't gotten the check back—but most E-Bay sellers don't do that.

So if you have a book that's really scarce, like an Allen Ginsberg book that was printed in 200 copies, and the person who owns it sets their coffee down on it, they instantly ruin the collectibility of the book?

For the most part, yeah. You can cross the threshold into being non-collectible pretty easily.

Even if it only came out in a small edition?

It varies, book to book, and there are some books like Hemingway's first book. That book can have some pretty grievous problems and still be worth \$25,000 instead of \$75,000. You know, the people who collect books don't do this to impress their friends, because their friends are going to walk right by their bookcase and not realize that these bright shiny books and dust jackets are any different from the ones that came from 'Book-of-the-Month' club. So they do tend to be thoughtful, interesting people, really immersed in a particular aspect of their collection. They're often the most knowledgeable people on that writer or that period that you're going to encounter. You'll see collections that radiate out in unexpected ways because the person has perused these connections.

What kinds of things?

There are some obvious connections, like collectors of the Bloomsbury writers who started off with Leonard and Virginia Woolf and then radiated out into all those other people. You find it in Latin-American literature with Borges, and if you follow the tracks they lead in a number of interesting directions, like the Ocampo sisters who were central to that whole group. They had the money to make it all work. And so you start to get these little constellations of people connected with a scene, so that really you see how a writer like Borges doesn't just come out of the woodwork with his own genius but emerges from a really interesting milieu that provided the underpinnings for him. Collectors, or at least their collections, can often show you how this works.

Do you write yourself?

No.

Do most book dealers?

I don't know. I took some writing courses when I was at Goddard, but I felt like one of those people who was a good baseball player in high school and went to the minors only to find out I couldn't hit a curve ball. Writing courses gave me a much greater appreciation for what writers do, though—and what's behind good writing. It's also why I feel that writing a bad thriller is no mean feat. To make it all hang together takes work and skill and talent. You add to that literary artistry, and suddenly you're talking about people who are really hard workers, really knowledgeable, really intelligent, and capable of expressing themselves in words. Every now and then I meet writers, whose work I like very much, who talk just like their writing. Which is amazing.

SELECTIONS FROM THE CATALOGS OF KEN LOPEZ

Ken Lopez

ABBEY, Edward. *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. Philadelphia: Lippincott (1975). His most famous novel, which helped popularize the radical environmental movement. A book inspired by, and which in turn helped inspire, the direct-action environmentalists characterized by such radical groups as Earth First!, it summarizes Abbey's values his hatred of the developers/despoilers of the American Southwest, his sympathy for those who would thwart them in any way at any cost and, most important, his appreciation of the natural beauty of the desert from the subtleties of its ecosystems to the grandeur of its scale. Fine in a near fine, lightly dusty dust jacket with a short edge tear. A very attractive copy of this novel which, because of its thin paper dust jacket, is usually found much more badly worn. \$750

BECKETT, Samuel. *Proust*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1931. A critical study of Marcel Proust by the author of *Waiting for Godot*, whose post-war writings reshaped contemporary literature, introducing what came to be called the Theater of the Absurd, and eventually led to his winning the Nobel Prize in 1969. Inscribed by the author: "For Elizabeth/ on her birthday/ wishing her many happy/ returns of the day./ Samuel Beckett." A small, fragile volume. Pictorial boards mildly foxed; small abrasion to fly-leaf; near fine in a near fine, spine-tanned dust jacket. An uncommon book, and rare signed. \$3,000

BECKETT, Samuel. *Echo's Bones and Other Precipitates*. Paris: Europa Press, 1935. Beckett's fourth book, a collection of poems that was the first book published by George Reavey's short-lived Europa Press, and which Beckett

paid Reavey to publish. Reavey started Europa Press in order to print poetry, after being dismayed by the way poets were treated by the mainstream English publishers of the time. He was also, a couple of years later, responsible for Beckett's first novel, *Murphy*, being published in the U.K., after he had recommended it to Herbert Read. Of a total edition of 327 copies, this is one of 50 copies *hors commerce*. Covers sunned but crisp; near fine in wrappers. \$2,000

BOWLES, Paul. *A Little Stone*. London: Lehmann (1950). His second book of fiction and first collection of stories the form which many consider to be his greatest strength which has no comparable American edition: a similar but not identical collection was published later in the year in the U.S. as *The Delicate Prey*. Of 3500 copies printed, this is one in the presumed first issue binding, in light green cloth. The print run was smaller than that of *The Sheltering Sky* and is the second smallest print run for any volume of Bowles's fiction. Faint offsetting to endpages, even fainter sunning to spine cloth; very near fine in like dust jacket. \$450

BURROUGHS, William S. *The Naked Lunch*. Paris: Olympia (1959). The first edition of his second book, one of the all-time great drug novels and a high spot of Beat and postwar American literature one of the "big three" volumes of the Beat movement, along with Kerouac's *On the Road* and Ginsberg's *Howl*. This is the "second issue" with the New Franc stamp over the original old franc price on the rear cover, although the issue point does nothing more than indicate that this is a copy of the first printing that was not sold by the publisher until after January, 1960, when the Franc was revalued. Published only in paperback in Paris by Maurice Girodias' important small press, in an edition of 5000 copies (comprising both "issues"), three years before it could be published in the U.S. Nicked at crown; still fine in a fine dust jacket with a small nick near the upper edge of the front panel. A beautiful copy of a modern classic. \$4,000

-. Same title. NY: Grove Press (1959)[c. 1962]. The first American edition and first hardcover edition of his second book, not published in this country until three years after its original publication in Paris, and then only after a number of high-profile literary figures argued its case as a novel of great literary merit and import. It was published by the maverick publisher Barney Rosset, of Grove Press, in a tiny edition of 3500 copies a smaller number than was done of the scarce French paperback edition in 1959. A fine copy in a near fine dust jacket with a spot of rubbing to the spine. \$750

CARSON, Rachel. *Under the Sea-Wind*. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1941. Her uncommon first book, published ten years before her second and twenty years before *Silent Spring*. This copy is inscribed by the author: "Dear Elsie Ström -/ If you are going to collect/ Carson you'd better begin at the beginning, and this is it./ Gratefully/ Rachel Carson/ April 14, 1951." A nice inscription and an interesting indication that someone was collecting Carson first editions as early as 1951, the year her second book was published. Foxing to pastedowns and mild sunning to spine cloth; near fine in a very good, internally foxed dust jacket with shallow wormholes at edges. Scarce signed. \$2,500

CARSON, Rachel. *The Sea Around Us*. NY: Oxford University Press, 1951. Her second book, winner of the National Book Award and the John Burroughs Medal and the book that would have served as more than adequate legacy had she not surpassed herself by writing *Silent Spring*. Inscribed by the author: "To Elsie Ström,/ for all the nice things/ that have happened since/ she first read the tale of/ a very ancient fish!/ Rachel L. Carson." Offsetting front endpapers; near fine in a very good dust jacket with slight chipping at the upper edge and a light degree of spine fading. \$1,250

CASTANEDA, Carlos. *The Teachings of Don Juan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968. His first book, originally presented as a scholarly work, later seen as a popular culture landmark, and still later debunked by

a number of serious critics as fiction. The premise of the book, as described in the dust jacket copy "It has been assumed that the West has produced no way of spiritual knowledge comparable to the great system of the East. The present book is accordingly nothing less than a revelation . . ." gives a fair indication of its impact, regardless of whether it is fact or fiction: *The Teachings of Don Juan* was one of the most important books published in the U.S. in the 1960s for its far-reaching cultural impact, affecting our view both of Native American cultures and traditions and, by extension, of the nature of spirituality and the metaphysical with implications for everything from politics to ecology. Bookplate front pastedown; otherwise a fine copy in a very near fine dust jacket with trace edge rubbing. Probably the most attractive copy we have handled of this book, which tends to show wear readily. Later issued by Simon & Schuster in an edition that has the earmarks of a first printing but is actually a later edition. The first edition is extremely scarce, especially in collectible condition. \$1,250

CÉLINE, Louis-Ferdinand. *Voyage au Bout de la Nuit*. Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1932. The first edition of Céline's first novel, *Journey to the End of Night*, which was loosely autobiographical and followed a young veteran of World War I in his travels and life after the war a period marked by his time as a doctor caring for the sick and injured and at the same time as one who, like his entire generation, was deeply affected by the senseless carnage of the war and became disdainful thereafter of human folly, greed, and vanity. One of the most influential modernist novels of the period, both for the darkness of its vision and the emphasis on a literary style that self-consciously strove to revitalize a literary tradition that the author felt was overly stiff and formal. A controversial novel Celine has been widely characterized as racist and anti-Semitic both for his writings and as a result of his actions in World War II it nonetheless remains one of the powerful portraits of post-war despair and cynicism. "Celine" was the pen name of Louis-Ferdinand Destouches and his first novel won praise from both Leon Trotsky, an exiled Communist leader, and the right-wing extremist Léon Daudet. It won the

Renaudot Prize and has been in print constantly since its original publication. A little over a year ago, the manuscript for this novel sold at auction for \$1.5 million, making it one of only a tiny handful of manuscripts that have ever brought a million dollars, among them *On the Road*, Kafka's *The Trial* and Joyce's *Ulysses*. This copy is inscribed by the author and signed "Destouches." Originally issued in wrappers; here bound in full black morocco in art deco style, with two light blue-green onlays depicting a shaft of light emanating from a solid matte silver circle, shining through abstract blind tooling that wraps around both covers. Original front wrapper bound in and spine bound in at rear, and housed in a custom clamshell box. An extraordinary and attractive binding, and an extremely uncommon book to find signed or inscribed. Fine. \$5,500

DICK, Philip K. *Solar Lottery*. NY: Ace (1955). The first book, a paperback original, by one of the most innovative science fiction writers of his time, the author of the novel on which the film *Blade Runner* was based and the winner of virtually every major award in the field of science fiction over the course of his career. Because so many of Dick's books were published as paperback originals, an award was ultimately named after him, for the best original paperback published in a given year. Signed by the author. An Ace Double, bound together with Leigh Brackett's *The Big Jump*. Light rubbing at the spine fold, else fine: a very sharp, crisp copy of an important first book, seldom found signed. \$900

DONLEAVY, J.P. *The Ginger Man*. NY: Random House (1961). The play version of Donleavy's first book, which was published in Paris in 1955 in the Traveller's Companion series, a publishing choice by maverick publisher Maurice Girodias which later cost him his entire company, when Donleavy finally won a 25-year long lawsuit resulting from Girodias marketing his novel as part of a pornography series. This version contains an introduction by Donleavy about the play closing in Dublin when Donleavy and the director refused to make it less offensive to the Dublin audience. Fine in a near fine, very lightly spine-tanned, price-clipped dust jacket. \$125

FARRELL, James T. *Young Lonigan*. NY: Vanguard Press, 1932. The first edition of his controversial first book, the first volume in the Studs Lonigan trilogy, which was selected as number 29 on the Modern Library's list of the best 100 novels of the 20th century. This is the first issue, in brown cloth, with title page, copyright page, and introduction all dated 1932. It is presented as a "special edition, the sale of which is limited to physicians, surgeons, psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, social workers, teachers and other persons having a professional interest in the psychology of adolescence." Farrell chronicled the maturing, degradation and, finally, death of a young Chicago man, destroyed by the pressures of modern urban street life, and was written in a gritty, realistic, stream-of-consciousness style that was shocking at the time. The books were controversial in their day for their unflinching, realistic portrayal of the brutalities of city life and their honest rendering of both the thoughts and the speech of a youth growing up on the streets. This is a bibliographically confusing title, with many references contradicting each other and suggesting that the Thrasher introduction was added in 1935 despite the dates on the title page and copyright page remaining 1932. However, there was reportedly also an edition with a copyright date of 1934 and yet another with a preface dated 1935 that is in addition to the Thrasher introduction, so it is hard to image the existence of a 1935 edition that contains only 1932 dates. We believe that this is the true first edition, first issue of this title and that the dates are correct as indicated, and that bibliographic complexity combined with the natural tendency to trust received wisdom when encountered in print has conjured up a fictional issue of this title that precedes this and lacks the 1932 introduction by Thrasher (especially given that Thrasher's introduction is dated in February 1932), and another fictional issue of this title that was published in 1935 but retains all the 1932 dates and only has the 1932 introduction but not the 1935 one. This edition has a disclaimer that reads: "It is the sincere conviction of the publisher that this book could not conceivably harm any individual, whether or not a member of a profession. The plan for restricting its circulation has been adopted merely for the purpose of meeting official prejudice." But this is ambiguous: it can be read to suggest

that a new edition, this one, has been given restricted circulation because an earlier edition was harshly judged by official prejudice, or it can be read as a way of attempting to preempt imminent censorship. We believe the latter interpretation is correct, in light of the bibliographic points in the book itself, and we would welcome any information confirming or refuting this view. In fact, Farrell's novels including the Studs Lonigan trilogy were censored numerous times throughout his career both at the time of publication and, in some cases, many years later. Because of this he was an outspoken critic of censorship of the arts, both within and outside his own field, including taking a public stand against the Production Code in the motion picture industry in 1938. Fine in a very near fine dust jacket with a couple short nicks at the spine base. A beautiful copy of an important first book. \$1,500

FAULKNER, William. *Go Down, Moses and Other Stories*. NY: Random House (1942). The first edition, first issue, in black cloth stamped in gold and red and with red top stain. Faulkner intended this as a novel, or sequence of related stories, and later editions removed the phrase "and other stories" from the title. One of the most important books in the Faulkner canon, which includes perhaps his most frequently anthologized story, "The Bear." Front hinge starting; tiny spots to top stain; faint handling to boards; still a near fine copy in a very good, price-clipped dust jacket with several small edge chips. \$1,500

FITZGERALD, F. Scott. *The Beautiful and Damned*. NY: Scribner, 1922. Fitzgerald's second novel, third book, published two years after he wowed the literary world with *This Side of Paradise* and three years before he established his literary immortality with *The Great Gatsby*. All of his first three novels captured the dizzy exuberance of the 1920s, as well as satirizing its superficialities, and Fitzgerald's reputation derives from his seeming to have been both an exemplar and avatar of his times and a martyr to them, simultaneously and ultimately tragically. This is a near fine copy in a first issue dust jacket that has had expert professional restoration. An extremely scarce

book in dust jacket these days, comparable to the legendary scarcity of *Gatsby* in jacket, a fact that should not be surprising, as the two had almost identical first printings 20,600 for *Beautiful* and 20,870 for *Gatsby* and used the same kind of soft unlaminated paper for the jacket. A very attractive copy of a modern high spot, one of the Radcliffe 100 Best Novels of the century. \$9,500

FORSTER, E.M. *A Passage to India*. NY: Harcourt Brace (1924). The last and most famous novel by one of the greatest British writers of the twentieth century. His novels *Howard's End* and *A Room With a View*, which were both made into well-received films well after his death, exhibit piercing critiques of English manners as they probe the hidden aspects of his characters' lives. Forster's homosexuality was a well-kept secret at least from the general public until after his death, and the dichotomy between that which is felt and that which is expressed is reflected throughout his writing. Sections of the jacket tipped to front and rear flyleaves; front hinge cracked; some handling evident on boards; a very good copy lacking the jacket in its entirety. Listed on all major lists of the top books of the last century. \$100

GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ, Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. NY: Harper & Row, 1970. The first American edition of his masterwork, one of the most important novels of the century, which introduced magical realism to a wide audience and helped bring the "boom" in Latin American literature to this country. At the end of the 1970s this book was voted by the editors of *The New York Times Book Review* to be not only the best book published in the last ten years but the one most likely to still be read and still be important one hundred years hence. García Márquez has been awarded the Nobel Prize, among countless other literary awards. Mild splaying to front board, which has a thin, vertical, spotted line of white paint near the foredge; still a near fine copy in a supplied, near fine, first issue dust jacket with a sticker over the price (still visible) on the front flap. This book has become increasingly difficult to find with the correct first issue dust jacket (with an

exclamation point at the end of the first paragraph of text on the front flap). For years, the priority of the two issues was unknown, and their relative scarcity a matter of some doubt but little import. Since the discovery of the galley proofs with the flap text included in proof form, the priority has been clearly established, and copies of the first issue have been snapped up in the market whenever they appear, leaving only copies with second issue jackets readily available. This copy of the book has the green and yellow headbands; no priority determined. \$2,500

GARDNER, John. *The Resurrection*. NY: New American Library (1966). His first work of fiction, one of the handful of significant literary first novels that were published by NAL under the editorship of David Segal. NAL was primarily a paperback publisher, with an emphasis on mass market paperbacks and a strong commercial focus. Publishing such writers as Gardner, William Gass, Cynthia Ozick and Michael Shaara was a fairly daring step; given the scarcity of all of those first novels, it would seem that such publishing daring was at least in part counterbalanced with caution in the form of short print runs: this novel, for example, had a 2500 copy first printing. Signed by the author. Tiny bump to top page edges; still fine in a very near fine dust jacket with one short, closed edge tear and slight fading to the color encircling the author's name on the spine. A beautiful copy of this important first book, seldom found in this condition. \$2,000

GARDNER, John. *The Wreckage of Agathon*. NY: Harper & Row (1970). Gardner's second novel, after *The Resurrection* and preceding his more well-known *Grendel*. Dust jacket blurbs by Stanley Elkin and, notably, William Gass, with whom Gardner had a prominent and public dispute in later years over Gardner's concept of "moral fiction" and the responsibilities that entailed for contemporary authors. Gass became the spokesman for the other side of the issue arguing that constraining fiction to the requirements of a particular morality was a counterproductive throwback to earlier days when Art was supposed to serve a recognized higher authority and became

thereby little more than official propaganda. However, Gass and Gardner had a long-standing relationship and were quite good friends, notwithstanding the public split over this issue. Gass's presence giving a support notice on this book provides a footnote to the more public quarrel the men had later over a not insignificant question, which still incites controversy. Signed by the author. Fine in a very near fine dust jacket with just a bit of surface dirt on the rear panel. \$450

GREENE, Graham. *The Quiet American*. London: Heinemann (1955). A novel set in Saigon during the early years of the French Indochina war and based on several actual incidents involving Colonel Edward Lansdale, the CIA operative who has been called "the attending physician at the birth of South Vietnam." Greene's novel might have passed entirely from view among the bulk of his more ambitious writings had it not so clearly foreshadowed the moral terms of the coming American involvement in Vietnam with its theme of Western innocence/arrogance and good intentions gone awry. Greene, perhaps more than he expected, anticipated the failure of the half-hearted and conflicted Western efforts in Vietnam. Slight spine slant; else fine in a very good, spine-tanned dust jacket with several small edge tears. \$150

HEMINGWAY, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*. NY: Scribner, 1929. Hemingway's second great novel, after *The Sun Also Rises*. A Connolly 100 title and a book that has been called the greatest war novel of all time, although only a small part of it has to do directly with the war. After the critical acclaim and commercial success of *The Sun Also Rises*, which went through 10 printings by 1929, Hemingway, together with F. Scott Fitzgerald, was widely seen as the leading spokesman for the "Lost Generation" of American expatriate writers in the years following World War I. His novels and stories captured and defined that experience in a way that has helped shape all views of it since. *A Farewell to Arms* was, by far, his most commercially successful book to date, and its success overshadowed everything he was to write for the next decade or more. With this novel

Hemingway, in effect, created a legacy that he himself was unable to live up to until much later, with the publication of *The Old Man and the Sea*, the book that is generally credited with his winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954. Offsetting to endpages, minor mottling to boards; a near fine copy in a good, spine-tanned, first issue dust jacket with faint dampstaining and some abrasions to the rear panel and chipping to the spine extremities. \$3,750

-. Same title, the limited edition. One of 510 numbered copies signed by the author. A little foxing to the spine base; else fine in the publisher's fragile slipcase, which has been internally repaired along one seam. Hemingway's only signed limited edition, an attractive production, and an especially well-preserved copy. \$17,500

HEMINGWAY, Ernest. *Across the River and Into the Trees*. NY: Scribner, 1950. Hemingway's last full-length novel to be published in his lifetime. It had been a decade since his previous novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, had partly redeemed the author's fading reputation, and publication of this book was eagerly awaited by the literary world. However, despite its being a bestseller for 21 weeks (with seven weeks at #1), the novel was thoroughly savaged by the critics, who used such phrases as "a thoroughly bad book," "Hemingway at his worst," and "a synthesis of everything that is bad in his previous work [which] throws a doubtful light on the future." Long owner inscription on the recto of the list of Hemingway's previous books; a near fine copy in a fair, first state dust jacket with several significant chips that have been internally repaired, but not restored, with rice paper. \$125

HEMINGWAY, Ernest. *The Old Man and the Sea*. NY: Scribner, 1952. The last of Hemingway's books published in his lifetime, a novella that won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and earned him, two years later, the Nobel Prize for literature. A short novel that has been characterized as a fable, it deals with a Cuban fisherman's struggles to land a giant marlin that he has hooked, and reflects Hemingway's concern for life as a struggle of man

against nature, including his own nature. Cloth a bit dusty; else fine in a very near fine dust jacket with a small tear at the lower spine. The dust jacket is what has commonly been called the "second state" with the Hemingway photo in olive, not blue, tones although that designation has long been suspect: Carter defines states as differences that exist prior to publication, which essentially precludes assigning priority to them (in his estimation: he prefers to identify them as "variants" of equivalent, or at least non-discernible priority). And the fact that the blue-tinged photo turns up not only on copies of the first printing but on copies of later printings suggests that Carter's designation is appropriate: they are variants but ones to which no certain priority can be assigned. That being said, this is an extraordinarily attractive copy, far nicer than most that appear on the market. \$2,000

KAVAN, Anna. *The House of Sleep*. Garden City: Doubleday (1947). An autobiographical novel by this writer whom Anaïs Nin praised for her "nocturnal writing," which explored the dark side of the human psyche. "Kavan" was born "Helen Woods" and took her pen name from a character in one of her early novels. She became a heroin addict in 1926, took amphetamines when she was writing throughout much of her life, and attempted suicide three times; her depression, and her attempts to self-medicate, form the basis for the novels by which her reputation was earned, including this one "a penetrating insight into the subconscious world of dreams and shadows," according to the publisher. Remainder stamp to front pastedown and front jacket flap; else fine in a near fine, very slightly edge-worn dust jacket. Uncommon. \$250

KESEY, Ken. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. NY: Viking (1962). Kesey's landmark first book, a pivotal novel of the literature of the Sixties, which helped to shape a generation's attitudes on issues of authority, power, madness and, finally, individuality. The early printings of the U.S. edition contain text that was later excised and changed after a lawsuit was brought against Kesey and his publisher by a woman who was a nurse at the institution

which Kesey used as a model for the novel; she charged him with portraying a character that was based on her (and had the same first name) in a disparaging manner. The character was rewritten after the third hardcover printing, and later editions, including the mass market paperback and the "definitive" text in the Viking Critical Library Series, have an alternate character in her place. A fine copy, with top stain uncharacteristically rich, in a very good dust jacket, unfaded but edgeworn, with a tear at the lower front spine fold and surface scratches to the rear panel. One of the nicer copies we've had, or seen, in recent years. \$7,500

LESSING, Doris. *Martha Quest*. London: Michael Joseph (1952). Her third book, and the first in her "Children of Violence" series, which became a landmark of the feminist movement in the 1960s. Martha Quest is the central character of the series, who has grown up in a sheltered environment in Africa, as Lessing did, and who discovers her own ideals and aspirations through literature. As she comes to realize that the world around her falls short, she becomes, in effect, a rebel and a particularly astute and astringent social critic. Martha Quest became a model for women coming into their own and relying on their own perception and judgement in defining themselves in the world. The American edition of this novel was not published until 1964, after the success of *The Golden Notebook* in 1962. Erasure front flyleaf, light crease to spine; near fine in a near fine dust jacket with wear at the spine extremities. \$200

LOPEZ, Barry. *Coyote Love*. Portland: Coyote Love Press (1989). A beautiful hand-printed limited edition of three Coyote tales from North American Indian traditions. One of only 99 copies, bound in Mexican Bark covers, illustrated by Gary Buch and hand-illuminated by Allen Q. Wong. Signed by the author and illustrator. An extraordinarily handsome volume, each copy an individual work of great artistry, with beaded string ties hung from the binding evoking the Indian culture of the book's subject. A fine copy of one of the nicest limited editions we have seen. \$550

LOWELL, Robert. *Lord Weary's Castle*. NY: Harcourt Brace (1947). Later printing of Lowell's first book, winner of the 1947 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. Inscribed by Robert Duncan to poet Landis Everson in 1948. Name ("Everson") on front pastedown; dampstained lower board edges; very good in a good, dampstained dust jacket with modest rubbing and edge creasing. A nice association. \$200

MATTHIESSEN, Peter. *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*. New York: Viking (1983). Matthiessen's controversial and suppressed book on the conflict between agents of the federal government and members of the radical American Indian Movement in the 1970s, which culminated in a gun battle that left two FBI agents and one Indian dead. Matthiessen argues that the conviction of Leonard Peltier for the agents' death was a miscarriage of justice. His book was the subject of two lawsuits by one of the FBI agents involved in the case and by the former governor of South Dakota which effectively suppressed it for nearly a decade. A Supreme Court ruling declining to hear the case after an appeals court had thrown out the suits on the basis of First Amendment considerations finally allowed the book to be reprinted after nine years of litigation and untold millions of dollars in legal expenses a harrowing experience for the author, his publishers and (one assumes) their insurers; and a sobering example of how a legal case can effectively suppress a publication even if the case is finally deemed to be without merit: Matthiessen's book was effectively removed from its target audience for the crucial window of time during which it was most relevant (and agitation on Peltier's behalf might have had the best chance for success). A landmark of literary history and First Amendment tests. Fine in a fine dust jacket. \$250

McPHEE, John. *Giving Good Weight*. NY: FSG (1979). A collection of essays and articles from *The New Yorker*, one of which a profile of an anonymous, but purportedly excellent, restaurateur created controversy when the subject of the article speculated that a prominent New York

restaurant used frozen fish for one of its plates. Heated denials and threats of libel suits followed, and McPhee issued a retraction in a later issue the first time such a thing had happened in *The New Yorker's* history. In the book, the offending passage is footnoted, along with a disclaimer. Signed by the author. Foxing to endpages; else fine in a near fine dust jacket with light shelf wear. Books signed by McPhee are relatively uncommon, as the author tends not to do the kinds of "author tours" that have become commonplace in recent years. \$85

O'BRIEN, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990. The first trade edition of his fifth book, chosen by *The New York Times Book Review* as one of the dozen best books of the year, in all categories. By broad consensus one of the best works of fiction to come out of the Vietnam war, and a book that straddles, or blurs, several usually distinct categories: it resembles a novel with characters that recur throughout the individual episodes; a memoir (the main character is named "Tim O'Brien" and bears many similarities to the author); and a collection of short stories, related but essentially independent. Whatever its category, it is a candidate to be considered the Vietnam war's equivalent to *The Red Badge of Courage* a straightforward story told from the perspective of one participant in the fighting, which rings with an authenticity that is made all the more powerful by the book's appearing not to pretend to much beyond a simple recounting. The sequence of episodes, however, is couched in a series of reflections on storytelling, the nature of stories and their relation to truth, which gives the book its own context: while O'Brien writes for a contemporary audience, which shares his knowledge of Vietnam, he is also writing for the ages for all those who will have *only* the story to go by, not the experience. The collection won the Heartland Award from the *Chicago Tribune* and the title story won a National Magazine Award, among numerous other honors that have been heaped on this volume. Like Michael Herr's *Dispatches*, this is one title that seems to be included in virtually every survey course of the field of Vietnam War literature. Signed by the author. Fine in a fine, first issue dust jacket. \$200

ORWELL, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. NY: Harcourt Brace (1949). The first American edition of his classic dystopia, a chilling extrapolation of the political tendencies in postwar Great Britain and one of the most influential works of the century whose very title became a synonym for an oppressive police state, and which introduced to the language and the political vernacular such words and phrases as "thought police," "newspeak," "doublethink," and "Big Brother." One of Pringle's hundred best science fiction novels and also a Burgess 99 and Connolly 100 title, and also chosen as one of the novels of the century by the Modern Library, Radcliffe, Waterstones and the New York Public Library. Several penciled notes in text; slight wear at crown; near fine in a spine-faded red dust jacket chipped at the extremities and rubbed at the folds; about very good. One of the defining books of the modern era. \$400

PATON, Alan. *Cry, the Beloved Country*. NY: Scribner (1948). The first American edition of Paton's first novel, a modern classic of racial prejudice under South Africa's apartheid system a bellwether book for race relations in this country as well as a searing exposé of conditions in Paton's own country. Owner name and date on front flyleaf; sunning at spine crown; near fine in a very good, spine-faded and edgeworn dust jacket with shallow chipping at the spine extremities and several internally tape-repaired edge tears. \$125

PERCY, Walker. *The Moviegoer*. NY: Knopf, 1961. His first book, winner of the National Book Award and a novel that helped establish Percy as both an important Southern writer and as a chronicler of the spiritual malaise of modern America. The Linda Hobson bibliography gives the first printing as 1500 copies although we have been told that it was more. This copy is fine in a very near fine dust jacket with just a couple tiny nicks to the top edge. A very nice copy of this book which, because of its dark, unlaminated dust jacket, often turns up showing much more wear and tear. Signed by the author. A scarce and important first book, and especially rare these days signed. \$7,500

RHYS, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. NY: Norton (1966)[1967]. A review copy of the first American edition. Rhys published her novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* in 1966 after nearly three decades of living in obscurity following the early successes of her writing career in the late 1920s and 30s. A reinvention of the life of Mr. Rochester's first wife, the "madwoman in the attic" in *Jane Eyre*, *Sargasso Sea* has come to be considered a modern feminist classic. Winner of the W.H. Smith Award and included on several of the lists of top books of the last century. Copyright page gives the date as 1966; review slip states 1967. Fine in a very near fine, corner-clipped (not price-clipped) dust jacket with trace rubbing at the crown. An important book, scarce in jacket, and rare as a republication copy. \$350

SARTON, May. *Encounter in April with Correspondence*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1937. Her first book, a well-received collection of poems. Warmly inscribed by the author: "For Beulah B. Brown/ with warm remembrance of those[?] days/ in her house!/ April 14, 1941/ May Sarton." Laid in are two typed letters signed to Mrs. Brown (one undated; another, with envelope, from May 1946); one autograph note signed with envelope; a holograph poem (unsigned) written on an index card; and a full page of holograph notes (unsigned) written on the verso of hotel stationery. The letters are primarily concerned with arrangements for speaking engagements; the notes also seem to concern the underlying impetus for a college tour. The book is a bit edge-sunned, thus near fine in a very good dust jacket with sunning and wear to the upper edge; the writings are fine, with the exception of the hotel stationery which is chipped across the top edge, not affecting text. For all: \$1,750

STONE, Robert. *Dog Soldiers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (1974). His second novel, winner of the National Book Award and one of the best novels to link the impact of the Vietnam war on American society in the Sixties to the dark side of that era the official corruption and the underside of the drug experiences of a generation. Filmed as *Who'll Stop the Rain* by Karel

Reisz, a well-received film for which Stone co-wrote the screenplay and which was nominated for the Golden Palm Award at Cannes. Signed by the author. Fine in a very near fine dust jacket with offsetting to the front flap and a hint of lamination peeling to the front panel. \$350

STONE, Robert. *Children of Light*. London: Deutsch (1986). The true first edition of his fourth novel, preceding the American edition by one week, and printed in an edition of only 4500 copies, vs. 40,000 (announced) for the American edition. A dark Hollywood novel, with themes from Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and *King Lear* and one of the best, and most hard-hitting, Hollywood novels since Nathanael West's *The Day of the Locust*. Reportedly, production of a film version of this novel has recently gotten underway. Fine in a fine dust jacket. \$100

THOMPSON, Jim. *Heed the Thunder*. NY: Greenberg (1946). The scarce second novel by this master of the *noir* thriller. Thompson's first three books were published in hardcover, apparently did not sell well, and thereafter all of his novels were issued as paperback originals, many of them in the short-lived but now considered classic Lion Library series. Thompson went on writing pulp fiction for decades but it was only in recent years that he has been retrospectively recognized as a master of the genre. Several of his novels have been turned into well-received movies, including *The Grifters*, *Coup de Torchon*, *The Getaway* (twice) and others. This book was published by a small publisher that mostly did reprints and remainder issues. Fine in a very near fine dust jacket with two tiny edge nicks and a very thin tear at the mid-spine. An exceptionally attractive copy of this scarce novel. \$2,500

CHASING MERCURY

Kari Redfield

Sometimes I walked and
My steps fell slow

Like leaves
And I had this really peaceful
Look on my face. I took each breath
And held it on my tongue for a while.

cut short. like that.
I need a strong mind. Einstein made his
Mind strong. Einstein was a good guy,
Forgetting names and places but following
Lights with a silvery shine the color of
Mercury which is just about the prettiest
Thing in the world.

WISE DANCE TWO

Tristan Tzara

growth of an unexpected propeller fog
impassable voltaic arc screws
the corridors spine of houses and the smoke
gradation of the wind that tears the linen
in a drawer the snuffbox you peel the oranges and the string
o valve of my worn-out heart
the flask close to the neck
suddenly the trains keep quiet

MOVEMENT

astronomical gargle
vibrates vibrates vibrates vibrates in the metallic throat of heights
your soul is green is meteorological emperor
and my ears are vegetable torches

listen listen listen I drink mbampou and your good will
take dance hear come turn drink turn ouhou ouhou ouhou
falcon falcon of your own bitter images
mel o my friend you lift me in morning to panama
which I am god of no importance or hummingbird
or the good fetus of my servant in suffering
or well-tailored explosion otter-color
dress of cascading curls interior letter that one receives in the long
 hospital very long letter
when you conscientiously comb your intestines your interior hair
you are to me insignificant as a fake passport
the chimney sweeps are blue at noon
bark of my bottom light it rains in the gulf of green drugs my dear my
 umbrella
your eyes are closed the lungs also
with the stream of water one hears the pee pee
the chimney sweeps

—translated from the French by Nick Moudry

from A PALACE OF PEARLS

Jane Miller

30

When a monk in Reading in the thirteenth century
with perhaps nothing more at heart
than that he's taken by new greens of late spring rain
takes the lovely folk song *Sumer is icumen in*
and makes of it a charmed harmonic round for four
it's time the dreary organum of the Church's
fourths and fifths hack a last phlegmatic cough
and lay its neck of tremulous chords upon the velvet cushion
of the executioner in a public square and let fly the ax
to the box so that a scandalous squawking can be heard
of squabs being carried across the sooty mist of the marketplace
of the Middle Ages squeezed by their feet by a master
anxious to whack their heads and drain the blood
and live by them as a rough seduction of a tune
is in the wind expressing terror or pity
as obviously as a rank smell of animal liver
it comes in little by little little passages in triple time

until the modal drone falls into a deep sleep
listening to the earliest violin open a wound
when its maker is born one busy fly-riddled morning
into an Italian family giving forth
the moan of an orphan a prelude with a single chord of longing
it is all through romanticism we will hear
the emotion gain and lose hold we will journey inward alone
one of those who has left an unmade bed
and the bright off-beat clang of the polis
for the gash in the cosmos with the wind blowing in
it is dark and we are darker pulled
onto a vast proscenium now so finely tuned
to solace and sickness we dare not move
THE GRAND PIANO CRAMMED INTO OUR EAR

We bow our heads
for the ancient draping of the gardenia lei in the hotel lobby
and are relieved of our possessions as per a reminder
that one must enter Paradise a little naked
before being ushered to a bed with a view of the eleventh green
lest there be any misunderstanding as regards the native burial grounds
beneath the eleventh which border the semi-permanent
hallucinogenic Pacific we learn that any and every bone
is also a guest of the Ritz-Carlton so to speak and is honored
with a prayer if it washes up and is returned to sacred earth
by the keeper of the culture a gentleman of liquescent eyes
as shiny as the kukui nut rinsed in its own oil and as rare
a species of this tropic as a barrel cactus or the fruit of a prickly pear
on the mainland's used up United other States
as a god he acknowledges we are here to say goodbye
properly to earth as a house and a garden
because we ourselves have de-planed way too late in the gargantuan day
to explain wriggling in rented rubber face-to-face
with striped convex-eyed cold-blooded creation
way too late to swim out
with shortness of breath up the deeply guarded secret
which the General of the Great Mother reported to the Duke

and subsequently to the King and the Duke himself repeated
to the King who asked to have the President awakened
only to be told the President had never gone to bed
because as the leader of the free world he must importune
the constituents even unto those of us belatedly
craning our necks under a halo of fronds or falling to our knees
in low cerulean tides that he very much hopes we will have enjoyed
our special evening of roast suckling pig buried in fire
unburied and consumed another century has hurriedly concluded
an enchanted evening meal long into morning with the rest of the day spent
starving begging and thirsty for many and for some eternity
the beleaguered leader announces it is time for the ceremony
on our Hawaiian honeymoon with other charter members
of Western civilization Japanese and Korean pretenders
and a Cuban queen a very handsome oxymoron
orbited by native surfers groundskeepers chefs
housemaids doormen bellhops and a monk
we all gather at the shore for the single-oared canoe
to glide into its slip without its bronzed sailor
as symbolic of there having been a fair game
played by one side everyone on the team shoots an arrow
and the best each round is counted
so that when they are routed

the ship of their little republic is specially delivered
to the newborn fishermen of the island
and thus is it whispered in the wild ginger
THE ANCESTORS ARE ASLEEP IN A SAFE PLACE

ENCYCLOPEDIA BROWN SAVES THE DAY

Jason Zuzga

The kidnapper was Carl, who owned Alfred.
He found the seat was cool.
The clue was the coffee pot.
For the boat, floating on the tide, would have risen too!
Mules simply cannot have offspring of their own.
He could not have jumped through a shade and closed window!
Electric clocks don't tick.
The real bird watcher walks west so
the sun's full light comes from behind him
and falls on the birds.

THE BROTHERS

Robert Walser

May I, good one, remind you quietly and certainly most tentatively of the time when we both were in S. . . —you as a beginning creative painter and I as a secretly beginning, aspiring poet, us with our youthful, striving craft or art apprenticeships—and everything connected with that endeavor that was pretty? To my knowledge I wrote and sent to you, before I arrived in person and surfaced at your place, a rather long yearning friendship poem that you received and read with pleasure. This touches me in a heavenly way when I think of it, even though it is naturally something to laugh about. It is godly beautiful and great to possess young cheeks and to have youthful life perspectives, an unutterable desire to sense a hunger for life and to be eighteen years old, for that was about the age we both were at that time. The capitol city S . . . appeared wonderful to me and to you yourself. You were, in the eyes of the newly arrived person, nothing less than an impressive capitol and world citizen. O, how lovely are youthful innocence and inexperience! What good and beauty does one acquire really with experience? Certainly not much very valuable. You were accompanying me in a friendly way through the streets into a certain Gerber Alley and then into the famous—and certainly to both of us unforgettable—Home Inn, where together we pitched our tent or, in other words, moved into our quarters to live and make a home in it together, which was certainly only to our advantage and not our disadvantage. Charming, so I would swear and claim, are our first bold artists' flying attempts, which are associated with more frequent crashes. But isn't throwing hats out the window onto passers-by in the street not perhaps almost even more beautiful than all painting, music-making and versifying? Weren't we in our hat throwing first-chosen masters and truly demonic virtuosos and didn't the good friendly host or innkeeper feel

himself obliged to warn us in a fatherly way against continuing the charming mischief? Really, seen from a certain vantage point your own or your brother's hat flying and spinning out the window, so that passers-by down below are amazed, is perhaps a hundred if not even a thousand times more beautiful than the writing of a perfect poem, thereby amazing the dear audience. Wasn't there in our artist's studio one of those beautiful days a surprise visit by a court preacher about whom we both laughed for a month? I was standing naked, serving you as a model of Marc Antony bemoaning Caesar's corpse, when the door to the study, the painter's studio suddenly opened and who should then stand in front of us striving poor sinners? The Mr. Court Pastor. "O God, what must I see with my eyes? What's going on here?" he shouted and without interruption he started drawing back, which ended in his fleeing out of control. How is it that the horror of this good sir—who obviously was alienated by these artistic exercises—caused us to laugh? We lived two disciples and brothers—new-comers, beginners, novices—not like on a charming friendship and bonding island in which everything is good and beautiful and carefree, where in uninterrupted friendly lisping and rustling and continuous sweet peace the living creatures enjoy the trust and full goodness of existence, where heaven and earth and creatures in general have grown together, and where people grow in such a harmless and good-hearted way and live easily from day into night and from night into day with fragrant flowers, plants, and the trusting good trees. Were we not wading around whole beautiful Sundays long and other days long in lush green countryside grass and in the godly soft dreamy May landscape in order to then and there rest from wandering under flowering apple and pear trees and "Landscapes," deliciously resting from the difficulty of painting and writing verses, whereby we often used to nap like counts and lords, to wake up later again as princes? We didn't yet read Verlaine but instead we did read Heinrich Heine and Uhland, which we tasted and savored and found not bad. Weren't also the refreshing limbs bathing in the Neckar wonderful and didn't we rejoice in the consumption of pear cider in the village inns? When we returned ugly, dusty and hungry

from our bold marching out back into our inn, we ordered the usual, respectively, each a rump roast with mixed salad for the hikers and noble brothers, which made the whole inn extremely amazed. Do grand and rich sirs have meals better and richer than the two of us? That I find quite questionable, as for us, after successfully completing our hiking efforts, the rump roast was a feast of the gods. How beautiful it is to be poor and young and unknown. How gladly would some seriously well-known person give his fame and all his respect for an eighth or even only an eightieth, for a third or a thirtieth, of this youthful state. The young ones desire honor, fame, success and respect, but the famous and the powerful desire for themselves the poor, wild, youthful yearning and the hot satisfaction of blissfully struggling with existence. Success doesn't make you happy but there needs to be, indeed, work and an aspiration on this poor earth full of contradictions. There must be fame and riches but fame and riches only manage to inspire lower and flat souls. On this earth there must be an eternal up and down and an eternal insatiability. Don't you also retain a memory, as I do, of the persona of the good-hearted charming opera singer B . . . , who had the high friendliness to generously invite the two of us rather poor devils, two examples and models of insignificance, to a gracious, beautifully spirited tea? Didn't we jump and run almost every evening to the shimmering court theater with the help of free tickets generously dispensed and given by friendly barons—stage managers—where we, among other countless pleasures, richly enjoyed the standing room only? One among other pleasures we had was to see Isolde as a petite Desdemona and the energetic Matkovsky as the same in the storm of the envy between the Moors, killing and murdering Othello. Was there anything higher and more beautiful than that? Not remotely! And the poor withered or dried prunes unhappily drowned, swimming in a plate full of water on the lunch table—could it be conceivable you would have forgotten it or that you could ever become forgetful of it? Just like the words and hymns of the gnarled church servants and brothers? What would you reply if I climbed on the stage of eloquence and said loudly that, according to the feeling of those who have attained the

competence of their certain age as to look at the country's past illuminated by the evening sun and the morning sun, the past beautiful hours would be a sanctuary? Does emotion not seize you too at the thought of the happy dawn, that cheerful time? (1917)

MY EFFORTS

Over the course of time, I've grown dubious to my publishers. One of them once invited me to write novellas for him but, perhaps until today, I haven't been successful in writing one single novel. When I was twenty years old I wrote verses and at the age of 48 I have started once again to write poems. In the task at hand, to create a self-portrait, I am avoiding as a matter of principle becoming personal. For example, I say the least about personalities of importance I have encountered along my way in life. Whereas I speak about my labors, how I might be successful, as exactly as possible. Presumably nowadays I have a certain reputation as a short story writer. Perhaps the short narration enjoys only a relatively short breath of literary appreciation. By the way, may I ask the reader invitingly that he or she might be convinced that what is pouring out of my mouth stems from my good mood? At this agreeable moment I sense that I myself am comfort. I was just writing of that time very calmly, whereas as a human being sometimes I was able to be restless. Casually, I have owned a lover for the last five years, whom very possibly I don't love with the qualitatively best love. To confess openly, from time to time I read French without wanting to claim I would understand word for word the books that are written in that language. Concerning books as well as human beings, I think a seamless understanding rather on the more uninteresting side than the enjoyable. Here and there maybe I had myself influenced by readings. Approximately twenty years ago I wrote three novels with a certain dexterity that perhaps are not novels at all, which might rather be books in which a lot is told and whose contents seem to be appreciated by a smaller or larger circle of fellow human beings. A much younger contemporary started quasi-squabbling with me a little while ago; because it didn't touch me deeply it occurred to him to tell me that he adored this or that earlier book from my quill. The fact is, the book in question is as good as out of print in the bookstores; that is the reason

why its author is not delighted. Some of my appreciated, respected colleagues perhaps suffer a similar fate. When I went to school one of my teachers praised my handwriting, which by all probability was going to be a distinctive handwritten piece of prose, and that praise helped me to produce numerous sketches which enabled me to keep up my profession, which of course I myself am understandably happy about. A while ago I switched from writing books to writing prose pieces because meandering epic contexts, so to speak, had begun to irritate me. My hand developed into a sort of writer-abstainer. In order to appease it, I only gladly expected more inferior proofs of efficiency and, sure enough, with such consideration I gradually did win it back again. Reining in my ambition, I gave myself an order to be satisfied with modest little successes. The writer in me obeyed the restrictions of a person who wanted to keep on living in a calm way, who had to deal with many newspaper editors. As I believe, I once possessed a better name, however I also got used to a not-so-excellent one; by wishing, I declared myself agreeable with the classification of "newspaper writer." Never was I impaired by this sentimental idea, though one could think I was misguided artistically. The question "is it not art anymore that you are writing?" seemed occasionally very gently to put its hand on my shoulder. I was allowed to tell myself however that someone who stays committed, whose idealistic burden amused him, doesn't need to be disturbed by the demands. Straightforwardly, I admit I couldn't let it into my heart to forbid myself to slack to a certain degree. It is enough for me to be allowed to think; it is believable that time kept being wondrously concerned about me. I am still alive and for that I am thankful and through that perhaps I am allowed to be thankful, that I agreed with myself. However, when occasionally I started spontaneously just to write so that perhaps, for archly serious people, it appeared to be a little funny, I experimented in the realm of language hoping there might be some unknown liveliness that would be a joy to incantate. By wishing to enlarge myself, finding all dimensions, and allowing this wish its existence here and there possibly I earned disapproval. Efforts are always accompanied by critique. (1928/29)

FOR THE CAT

I'm writing this prose, which seems to want to be created here by me, at quiet midnight, and I'm writing it for the cat so to speak, I for daytime use.

The cat is a kind of factory or industrial establishment, for which writers work, or deliver, daily, yes perhaps even hourly, loyally and industriously. It is better one delivers rather than stage through the delivery mere useless chatter, clever dialogue, or discussions. Here and there, even poets make poems for the cat by telling themselves they have found it smarter to do something rather than refraining from writing. Whoever does something for her, this essence of commercialism, does it for her enigmatic eyes. One knows the cat and one doesn't know her; she is slumbering, and she purrs in her sleep with enjoyment; whoever tries to figure her out is confronted with an impenetrable question. Even though the cat, as is commonly known, is dangerous to education, it is also obvious that one can't exist without her, for she is time herself in which we live, for which we work, who gives us our work, the banks, the restaurants, the publishing houses, the schools, the immensity of commerce, the phenomenal range of activity, the essence of the fabrication halls, all this and much more, if I wanted to enumerate one-by-one what I would consider superfluous, is cat, is cat. Cat is not only this for me, what proves to be valid for keeping business going, what has some value for the whole mechanism of civilization, but it is, as I mentioned before, the mechanics itself, and that which allows itself to become obvious not to be destined for the cat, that which has so-called eternal value, as for example the masterpieces of art or the accomplishments that are high above the humming, rumbling, rustling, rushing. What doesn't get consumed or eaten by dislike and preference, in other words, by the cat, who certainly is an eminent something, it is possible to imagine, permanent, that anchors like a cruise or cargo ship in the harbor of a distant afterlife. My colleague Binggeli writes, in my judgment, in every aspect for

the cat, even though he writes prose and verse of an extremely sophisticated nature. In referring to the catliness of his undoubtedly supreme creative process, Dinggelari, who is married to a knockout wife, who dines and eats splendidly, and who goes for walks daily, who lives in a romantically situated apartment, finds himself flagrantly in error as he continuously thinks the cat doesn't care about him. Whereas she considers him to be one of hers, he tries hard to think she considers him to be unsuitable, which in no way corresponds with the facts.

I call the world amongst you cat; for the afterlife I don't permit myself to have a familial expression.

Often the cat is misunderstood, one turns up one's nose at her, and if you give her something, the activity is associated with an attitude that is definitely not appropriate by arrogantly saying "this is for the cat," as if all people have always been working for her.

Everything that is accomplished she gets first; she tastes it and only that which survives in spite of her, which continues to have effect, is immortal.
(1928/29)

[Note: "für die katz," literally "for the cat," figuratively "for nothing," "for everyday use," "for the birds"]

ONCE UPON A TIME SOMEONE TOLD A STORY

As I remember to my amusement, I lived for a while with two women, who by the way I want to mention only later by starting my story with something exquisite and excellent.

First a dog steps up who I'd rather like for the time being to save for a little bit still, the way small children behave with treats because their lusty appetites do not allow them to eat.

A lackey, but no, for the time being about something else, namely that for a rather long time I imagined I was respectable and inordinately ambitious as hardly anyone else was.

My limbs possessed a certain leanness which seemed to be my characteristic trait, and it was with dexterity and flexibility that I jumped in front of a picture-perfect house which seemed able only to contain the trappings of success and I was about to tell the woman who stood charmingly on the threshold and was looking around that I was the owner and user of illusions when I was pointedly barked at by the aforementioned dog who obviously was an example of watchfulness.

I always loved my Lady Mama in spite of her entrepreneurship that guided me from stone to stone, from flower to flower, from advantage to disadvantage and vice versa, from my unrestricted heart's desire. Did I do this incidentally or intentionally? In my conviction, she was one of the most demure and nicest women who existed. However, perhaps at root I intended to say this differently, with more sophistication. As it has been said, however, I let it be and ask the reader to permit me to say I arrived one day in a wondrous city

in which the houses were rosy, the air in the alleys was crystal blue and the streets were covered with carpets. If one went for a walk here, fatigue was not an issue, rather one would relax while walking as if sitting enthroned in a coach or swinging as a mosquito or a beetle on a leaf. I met the pale lackey with whom I had a conversation for a short time while trustingly smiling up at his elegance, sitting on a coach seat. He talked to me with such agreeable, by all means legitimate, condescension! I found him to be of girlish kindness.

Chamois, I bring these up now unexpectedly, they danced and hopped from rock to rock, a figure of speech, which strikingly proves to me the stream of life on whose silk soft fluid back I was brought into the mountains where huts stood that competed in daintiness with window curtains or veils.

Daily, I meticulously cleaned my shoes, thinking Fortuna would love to see such carefulness. What one calls luck I imagined in a humorous way, and what one calls justice, because unspeakably calm, focused on appearance in thought and action, the goddesses must represent, and for that they have to look imposing. Soon I stood still, soon I moved. Here a discussion garnered a win, there an endeavor was connected with loss. Not every time can labors be rewarded. Sometimes omissions or failings have good consequences.

I don't have to return to the women from the beginning. Unconsciously, I already mentioned them.

Telling stories is much like reality. One intends to do various things, think of certain people and environs, but while hiking it changes, preconceptions disappear, the un-looked-for appears, the not wished for is welcome. How glad am I to have arrived at something important with my prose piece. (1929)

THE HOTEL

It was evening. A crystal chandelier sparkled from the ceiling. A sculptor smoked a cigarette and thought of the statuette that was forming quietly in his brain.

In a hotel, really, for reasons of continuing, complete leisure and because of the somehow dreamy pace, it always feels like evening.

Nothing would be done. Rather money orders would come from far-away places and from women's hands would come little attentions in the form of gifts. Bottles would be uncorked, menus would be ordered, letters written and received. The sculptor's wife sat in friendly anonymity, where she bothered herself with sewing and reading. Here it was easy-going, fine and luxurious, someone relevant in the literary world kept himself busy with the attempt to impart niceties to a circle of barely cosmopolitan girls.

Someone who had climbed down from steep cliffs, who was adorned by a mountain costume, and who still felt himself surrounded by the fragrances of great heights, in an alcove drew towards his chest a figure whom he thought was very attractive and who left him with the impression that she had the faculty to sink, so to speak, in his embrace of elevation.

In several of the rooms, which were partially filled with fairy-tale-like luxury, one of the youngsters—who suffer from overflowing freedom which they don't know how to use to do anything creative, who have so deeply sunken, ringed eyes, and who desire the happiness to have to bend under necessities—was spreading out on a sofa.

One of the aforementioned youth undertook an amorous attack on the governess at the buffet who, after a short time, however, communicated

with flaming eyes that she knew herself to be loved by one of the beer servers who draft the wetness that goes as smoothly through ordinary throats as excellent ones.

A dancer who was noticed by no one danced remarkably.

A bank director was seen playing cards with an architect and a seemingly up-and-coming machinist delivered a little flower bouquet to an at-least-not-completely unattractive maid so that she smiled the casual smile of a millionaire.

A hotel is an issue of the poor and the rich, missing the middle, who are mixing with reserve.

What is not present, sometimes, through that, is very. (1931)

—translated from the German by Dominic Le Fave & Anne Maria Schulteis

AREAREA

Darcie Dennigan

In July in a large room with late afternoon light & fat electric lamps & those
of us in Grand Central's
open space, I ask.

Left to right we have our face
in our hands. If we lean in

we will hear not the yappers or sadshoe scuffers but our own teeth, grinding
& a child, biting
an ashy streetstand apple.

The moon does not love us
though we are full, though we are

a thin yawn at times. Mother, we've said, motherless, less & less. With a fist
of lilies of the valley
from the gravel valley streetstand.

Happiness hates us because we know
it's not the sun but small

as a vacant chair's slight heat & we must get up, for tickets, for a look at this
room's gold clock
or the Sky Ceiling's winter

constellations, stained from us
breathing our yellow breath.

What Are We? Where Are We Going? When Can We Jump In The Fountain?

In rooms on rows
on our way to trains

by gate, by platform, we fit.
We've come from bed.

If old, our afternoon skin sallows as we pet the cat in his box. If young, we
chase the stray pigeon.

I ask about bigness,

one of us lying down
on our suitcase, head back

to the Sky Ceiling. I ask about joyousness, all of us very small, we with our
one spindly finger counting
fifty-nine bright stars,

two fish & one goat.

In the tableau the moon is our face with black curtains pulled all around it.

from THE FREQUENCIES

Noah Eli Gordon

91.1

It was the hour of the red radio song, the unsung hearth, of the centerpiece's past, hour of image curding, masked man of the hour, hour aflame, radio on fire, torrential rain at the drive-in, hour of poor reception, of the bent antenna, an hour behind the bleachers listening to jets to Brazil, bent hour, five second delay over the radio the time I made a request just to hear my own voice, disembodied hour, hour inside an hour of the dial, preprogrammed stations still working in a different city, city on fire, ash coming out of the radio.

If the fundamental cause of electricity
is negative, & the air is
negative space, & there's nothing
in-between the city & its limits
that won't one day be imbedded in amber
& remembered for walking
backwards, which it probably never did,
the big joke being on us, since
bones were an afterthought for the insects
& spreading ash won't help protect from threats as large as history or the
smell of rotting flowers, then there's nothing indigenous beyond the urge to
catalogue our own fingerprints, to tell someone on the phone that we
invented the damn thing, trying to balance the wheel with one hand & pull
the knife out with the other. I finally left the cathedral without a camera,
lulled in by a foghorn, shoving wires into a lemon, surgical incisions along
the shoulder blades to pull out an X that equals the love of airplanes & why
a fear of flying, since any equation is ultimately dependent on luck & even
a wineglass left outside in December can shatter overnight. I'm wearing the
blue shirt you left. I don't care how tight it is.

This might be rerouting the river to clear out the stables, but I sleep in the bathtub to keep the bee sounds at hand. You were sick of the various suits, thought the implants would hold your analog teeth. Don't tell anyone, but my diary entry for the day read: *rim*. After a fertile blowfish thrashing, something bursts into dust. Someone hitches the ash, unhooks the epigraph. The blue city. The rain city. The powder on the radio. The man without shoes laughing at the spaces between. What we hear off the air is not the radio lying to us, but what we encode to come to terms with our own enclosure. I was more interested in boundaries, carrying my seizure shadow back inside. Another wasp for the booth. The producer was rolling up his sleeves, riddled with the kind of honey from the heart of a helicopter. A million broken stereos unrattle a noise without meaning, keep everyone submerged, asleep & listening to the hive.

KINGDOM

Renee Gladman

Mona paints the image of Natalie running from the door of the pink house exactly one hour before she does it. On this day of gold light because of leaves. Though she does not paint the spectacle of leaves landing on her lover's hair because the city is full of painters and lovers and leaves. And Mona does not drink the coffee in her hand because it tastes like fish.

"But it tastes like fish," she reminds herself and stares at the cup in her hand falling to the ground with the sun up slightly. Forgets that thought when the person holding her utters the word "rain." And all the while, still drying on the easel, the painting.

Natalie pulls away from the person holding her, "Mona, your face is glowing," then turns her head toward the blue Volvo and shouts "two lefts and a right" through the cracked window. Now back at the person, light coming through her smile, curved indecisively.

But sometimes the light doesn't change and the painting does not dry and Mona forgets her preoccupation. Not looking at the pink house nor wondering if Natalie is inside. "What was I . ." she might ask herself about this time spent on the corner.

In answer, a man walks by the door of the pink house and it opens; a woman stands outside surveying the rain. A blue Volvo speeds by. The man says to himself, waiting for the light to change, "This city blands at noon as if something is out of order, like that music from the cathedral—it's easy."

"Painting houses is easy," he offers to the woman at the easel.
Walks half a block before he returns.
"I'll tell you why it's easy."
But she refuses to look at the canvas.
And "What's your problem?" He shouts.
And "Walk away from this woman," he must be thinking.

"Mona, look at that view. I have to go to work, but you must see it."

"Don't listen," Mona tells herself, "or you'll be back here every day."

This woman, even before she entered the pink house, industrial-like. Now coffee sliding down Mona's two fingers.

Standing in front of the drying painting: "I'm trying to look cool." Not thinking about the pink house nor the girl inside. "But that fish does stink," she yells and kicks the cup. Contents pour over the sidewalk, mixing with water to make slush, while a lake spreads down her armpits. The light mutes behind gray clouds, such as winter, such as fish beneath the waves of water.

Eva and Louie walk slowly up Prospect Street in a slight rain, only periodically conscious of the environment: a street with heavy traffic and no pedestrian signs. "It's all right Louie," Eva coaxes him across uneven pavement. "I'm trying to get us out of this rain."

Precisely that, the rain, makes the day impossible. The sky that impossibly hangs; she feels like a fish. And Louie feels like a dog, tied to this leash. The day is strange. Their pace is remedial: "Pick it up Louie." "Slow down Eva." They say to themselves.

A low-level sky, as though there is an expanse above the mean gray. And there is. So it droops on her shoulders. Walking and looking up into waves—being under water. “Try not to drop this,” she advises. Then drops it.

Fish splatter the street. Louie makes circles around their heads. Eva wishes she had left the heads at the store and that the shopkeep had de-scaled the fish. “But it’s never too late,” she speaks optimistically. Louie runs so fast around the fallen fish that Eva has trouble gathering them. He’s sprinting, thus creates a kinetic threshold. The fish are dead. That’s good. Eva has all but one wrapped in her sweatshirt and contemplates abandoning it. For there is music up ahead. “Louie, someone’s playing the violin to save us.” Its melancholy overwhelms him as they near it; he knows it’s a cello.

In a cold city at noon, there are only entrances. The wet gray mean opens every door. She's falling apart, but frozen. "Start walking," she says by way of encouragement, but an unsuspected crest in the pavement deters her; she stumbles and loses hold of the fish. Heads and scales splatter the street. "I'll eat this," and reclaims them effortlessly.

But it's Louie who trips on the crest and Eva who consoles.
Still the fish.
Still the wind puts it all on hold.
And this talking through the window of the Volvo—impos-
sible, in the rain.
And now the receding music.

Louie holds his mouth in a way that makes his face look long and sad. It's a terrible time to leave him, but she has to. "Louie, I'll get that violin and bring it back," she whispers in his ear and ties him to the fence. His lips are invisible.

A dog tied to a fence mopes in the rain. Gus wants to pet it. "Hey pup, what's your name?" Extends his hand and recoils quickly when the dog moves as though to bite it. Gus walks on. For distraction, he pokes his fingers through the slats of a gate, thinking that the dog smelled like fish. "But that's customary," something on a flyer says.

Mona places her lips against Natalie's neck and smooths away ripples formed from the salt of rain. Preceding that, Natalie, at practice, swooned. Behind the gate before it started to rain, also, before the view.

"Industry" is said.

Natalie runs through the gate with her neck bunched up from rain salt and Mona immediately wants to kiss it.

Her neck, now smooth, Mona sinks her teeth into. Natalie's cue to swoon then sprint back for the gate.

Gus, in front of the pink house, spies it.

"Louie, stay here. I'll be back"—is about all Eva can say before she runs off to find the person playing.

"I'm trying to find that violin," she speaks into the window of the blue Volvo.

The driver does not comprehend.

"That sound, mixed up with the wind. . ."

The driver says it's a cello.

She moves toward it, though it's only second best. Still gorgeous. But had it been the violin she would have asked to play it. "I should know the difference between the cello and violin."

Doors open as she passes them, all seeming to be the source.

The driver of the blue Volvo loses his bearings when it begins to rain. He wanders for an hour in a circuit of mean one-way streets until a figure leaps out at him like a dog. He slows to ask where it's going. The figure, like dog, does not respond, so he drives on.

The wind takes up rain as if cello.

Fish forgotten splatter the sidewalk, next to a building with a partially covered rooftop. Eva thinks it's a good idea to follow the fire escape up. "Sound, as I have learned, descends," she convinces herself, "so its origin is above me."

Louie bored of waiting decides to eat the fish head he's been hiding in his mouth. As he chews he realizes he is tired of the cold, breaks loose from the fence and is off.

The violin stands on the rooftop.

Bare dry naked wood curved with gray light coming through.

Rain falls slightly.

A sound comes from it that's easy, which is odd. No one is playing.

Eva takes a step forward.

Natalie speaks first: What are you doing up here?

"It was raining," she responds.

Then Mona: It still is.

"Yes."

And turns to face them.

"You smell good."

To which they all agree.

Wind wraps a field around the open space.
Hands reach slowly for her breasts, ass.
So easy when there's three.
Bends her neck back.
The other holds, like cathedral.
And right then Eva wants to hear it.

"Who was playing that cello?"
"It was Natalie."
"And you're she?"
Nothing follows.
But needing clarity:
"Was it always a cello?"

In this way Eva, Mona, and Natalie take refuge on the partially-covered rooftop. Natalie plays the cello and Mona leans over the edge while Eva considers the rain, recalls the fish.

"It protects the canvas" "I left Louie behind." "It protects the canvas." They exchange, infinitely.

At the same time, Natalie thinks, "I'll summon him with this." And, as if wind, leans into it.

TATTOOS

Rafael Pérez Estrada

"How can I draw a beautiful woman on your chest," asked the Third Emperor's impudent Tattoo Master, "when the only woman worthy of you is tattooed on mine?"

*

On the breast of the geisha Tsieou Kin, an expert hand had drawn a golden bee that sucked from her roselike nipple. Evidently, this caused the downfall of the second governor of the Minamoto family.

*

She had a dream of water, a fluid dream that ended in the irregular transparency of a pond. In it, the most distant landscapes, the secret places of childhood, were drawn over a nostalgic inversion of impossibility. The reflection of a flying duck made her doubt the dream's reality. To test herself, she imagined she was a naked boy, swimming. When she awoke, her breast was graced by a carp drawn by some friendly hand.

*

In order to engender the perfect child, Madame Tai tattooed an angel over her womb.

*

"Here, love and art use a single space to clarify one other," said the ancient master as he showed the wondrous skin of a youth where he had tattooed

a dove surprised by a hawk. This anecdote is told of the Tattoo Master of the Second Emperor, a painter as well-known for the liberality of his ways as the ambiguity of his words. During the Minamoto shogunate, the telling of this story was forbidden.

*

The ruthless shogun Ieyasu is credited with this warning: "You can engrave whatever you'd like on the bodies of the geishas, but you must respect the stone of the public statues."

*

Before leaving for war, the shogun of Nara had his wife's flawless abdomen engraved with the shadow of a terrible dragon. It seems that during the extended Gempei conflict the lady of Nara took pleasure in the imagination of a samurai who discovered she was unprotected from the rear.

*

So softly, with the voice of an autumn wind, while hiding distraught behind the pearl screen, the young but widowed Empress, when asked by her eunuchs to agree to marry again for the good of the Empire, unsteadily replied, "I will agree, but my new husband must wear the serene smile of my dead husband tattooed on his chest."

*

The Parchment Master of the Great Court was executed in Kyoto in the 13th century for producing a malicious tattoo on the chest of the shogun Kamakura, and for inciting the drawing to assassinate, as it did, its owner.

—translated from the Spanish by Steven J. Stewart

THE CLOUDS

Louis Jenkins

The clouds sweep toward the western horizon as if they were nomads. Horses, men, children, dogs and wives, cookpots and knives, feathers, flags, ribbons, and hides, skulls borne on tall poles, all caught up in the whirl, the ecstasy of motion. They set off with a will, as if inspired. It is as if they served the great Kahn himself, a man of such presence that simply to behold his majesty removes any doubt. To hear him speak banishes all hesitation. Onward! They would follow him across continents, across oceans if necessary. . . . But the thoughtless clouds move only at the behest of the wind. Who is no one at all.

REMEMBER

I'm trying to take up less space. I'm trying to remember to pick up after myself, to remember to take off my muddy boots before I come into the house. It's difficult. Partly because one branch of my family can trace their lineage directly back to an extinct species of water buffalo. I have to learn to talk quietly. To eat slowly, keeping my mouth closed. To wash and dry my little bowl and spoon and put them away. Turn off the lights, close the door softly. Descend the stairs carefully, avoiding the step that creaks, so not to wake the dead that are sleeping shoulder to shoulder. Those so long dead that their names and dates have eroded from their tombstones. The dead that can turn over in their narrow graves without ever touching the body next to them.

from YOUR TIME HAS COME

Joshua Beckman

Mad happy swallow
where'd you find that friend?

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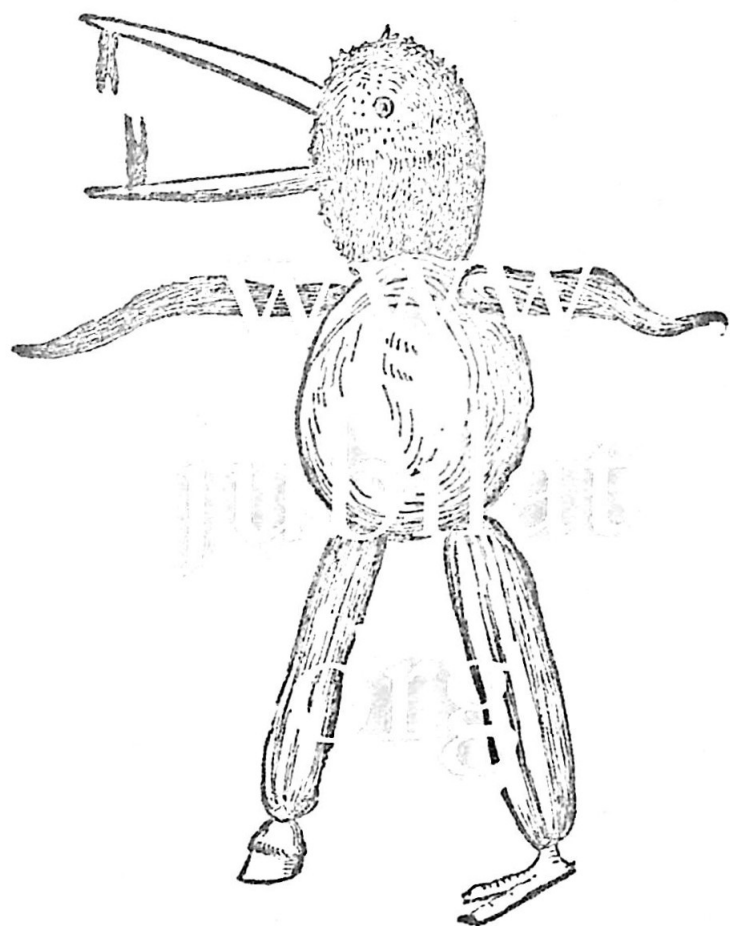
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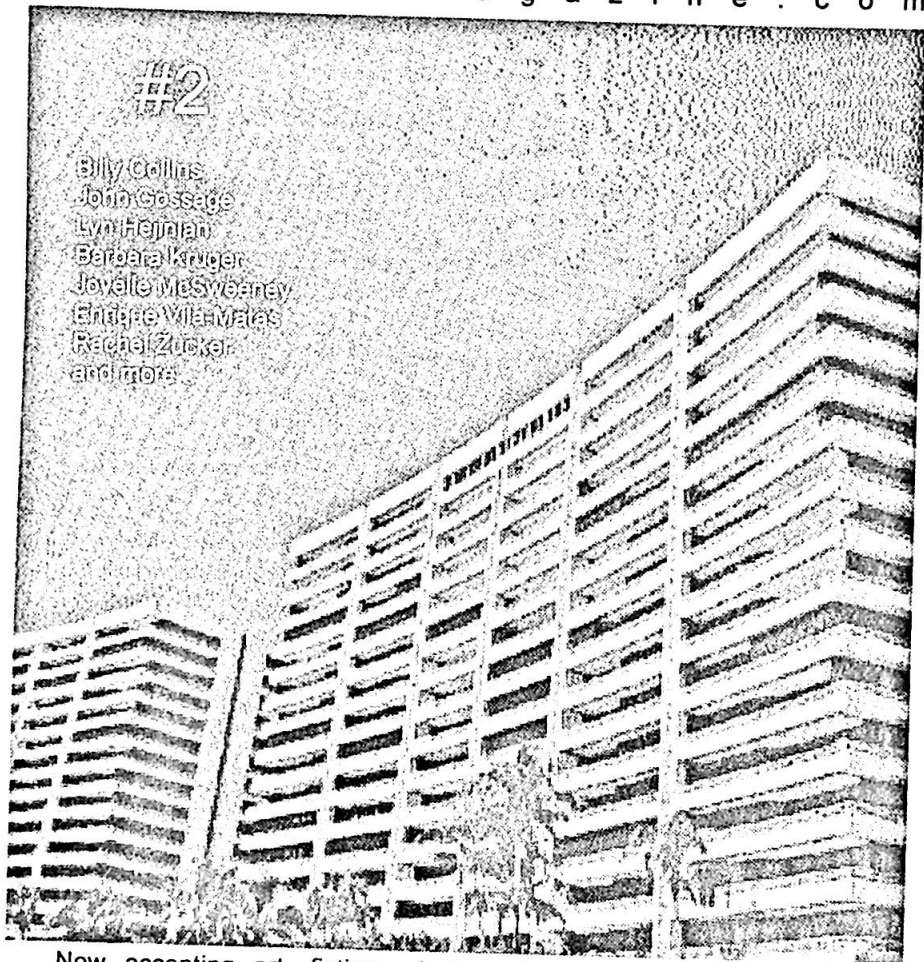
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